LIBRARY
University of Montana.

THE

# ENGLISH REVIEW

OCTOBER, 1913

## Solway Ford

By Wilfrid Wilson Gibson

He greets you with a smile from friendly eyes;
But never speaks, nor rises from his bed:
Beneath the green night of the sea he lies,
The whole world's waters weighing on his head.

The empty wain made slowly over the sand;
And he, with hands in pockets by the side
Was trudging, deep in dream, the while he scanned
With blue, unseeing eyes the far-off tide:
When, stumbling in a hole, with startled neigh,
His young horse reared; and, snatching at the rein,
He slipped: the wheels went over him as he lay;
Then, tilting over him the lumbering wain
Turned turtle as the plunging beast broke free,
And made for home: and pinioned and half-dead
He lay, and listened to the far-off sea;
And seemed to hear it surging overhead
Already; though 'twas full an hour or more
Until high-tide; when Solway's shining flood
Should sweep the shallow firth from shore to shore.
He felt a salty tingle in his blood;
And seemed to stifle, drowning. Then again,
He knew that he must lie a lingering while
Before the sea might close above his pain,
Although the advancing waves had scarce a mile

To travel, creeping nearer, inch by inch,
With little runs and sallies over the sand.
Cooped in the dark, he felt his body flinch
From each chill wave as it drew nearer hand.
He saw the froth of each oncoming crest;
And felt the tugging of the ebb and flow,
And waves already breaking over his breast;
Though still far-off they murmured, faint and low;
Yet, creeping nearer, inch by inch; and now
He felt the cold drench of the drowning wave,
And the salt cold of death on lips and brow;
And sank, and sank . . . while still, as in a grave,
In the close dark beneath the crushing cart,
He lay, and listened to the far-off sea.
Wave after wave was knocking at his heart,
And swishing, swishing, swishing ceaselessly
About the wain—cool waves that never reached
His cracking lips, to slake his hell-hot thirst . . .
Shrill in his ear a startled barn-owl screeched . . .
He smelt the smell of oil-cake . . . when there burst,
Through the big barn's wide-open door, the sea—
The whole sea sweeping on him with a roar . . .
He clutched a falling rafter, dizzily . . .
Then sank through drowning deeps, to rise no more.

Down, ever down, a hundred years he sank
Through cold green death, ten thousand fathom deep.
His fiery lips deep draughts of cold sea drank
That filled his body with strange icy sleep,
Until he felt no longer that numb ache,
The dead-weight lifted from his legs at last:
And yet, he gazed with wondering eyes awake
Up the green glassy gloom through which he passed:
And saw, far overhead, the keels of ships
Grow small and smaller, dwindling out of sight;
And watched the bubbles rising from his lips;
And silver salmon swimming in green night;
And queer big, golden bream with scarlet fins
And emerald eyes and fiery-flashing tails;
Enormous eels with purple-spotted skins;
And mammoth unknown fish with sapphire scales
That bore down on him with red maws agape,

Like yawning furnaces of blinding heat;
And when it seemed to him as though escape
From those hell-mouths were hopeless, his bare feet
Touched bottom: and he lay down in his place
Among the dreamless legion of the drowned,
The calm of deeps unsounded on his face,
And calm within his heart; while all around
Upon the midmost ocean's crystal floor
The naked bodies of dead seamen lay,
Dropped, sheer and clean, from hubbub, brawl and roar,
To peace, too deep for any tide to sway.

The little waves were lapping round the cart
Already, when they rescued him from death.
Life cannot touch the quiet of his heart
To joy or sorrow, as, with easy breath,
And smiling lips upon his back he lies,
And never speaks, nor rises from his bed;
Gazing through those green glooms with happy eyes,
While gold and sapphire fish swim overhead.

# Via Vitae

By Ernest Blake

Do you see the road a-winding through the dear green fields below?
Hear the bridle-bells a-jingle on the horses as they go?
Then beside blue flashing rivers, where the tall reeds softly sing
Plaintive songs of weary autumn, lyric carollings of spring.
Down the slopes wild pines rush headlong, tossing each his ragged plume,
Plunging all its life and glory in a shadowland of gloom,
But the shadows—are but shadows—— Hark, the bells are jingling still.
See, it ends the journey mounting where the sunlight's on the hill.

# Early One Morning

By Ernest Blake

Have you heard what the young moon said to me
As I walked in the morning early?
"Shall we make a match of it, you and me?"
Oh a saucy slip of a wench was she,
She lay on her back and laughed at me
As I walked in the morning early.

# Two Odes of Pindar

Translated by J. D. Symon

## Olympia II

FOR THERON OF AKRAGAS, WINNER IN THE CHARIOT RACE.

Lords of the lyre, my lays,
What god's, what hero's, or what mortal's praise
Shall it be ours to raise?
Certes, at Pisa Zeus is sovereign hight
And Herakles from war's brave first-fruits founded
The feast Olympic; but be Theron's might
Loud in this song of triumph sounded;
Theron, who drave four steeds to victory,
Theron, the ever righteous and benign
To stranger guests: Akragas' bulwark he,
The city's stay, flower of a famous line
Of forebears, who, striving great-heartedly,
Took for their dwelling by the river-side
An holy place, and were to Sicily
Her very eye: them did good-hap betide
Throughout their life, for ever leading forth
Riches and grace, to crown their native worth.
But Thou, to Kronos and to Rhea son,
Of high Olympos' seat the lord,
Chief of the chiefest games, and of Alpheos' ford;
For Thy delight in the most sweet accord
Of these my songs, keep gracious ward
For evermore over their fatherland
And o'er their later sons stretch Thy protecting hand.
Now of deeds done, whether for good or ill,
Not even the All-Father, Time, hath skill
The issue to undo, yet Fortune may
In kindly wise, Oblivion bring.

For joys in brave foïson slay
The pain whose old recurrent sting
Is quelled when Fate one heaven-sent day
Bids Happiness to high fruition spring.

True runs this rede of mine
For those fair-thronèd maids of Kadmos' line,
Doomed in deep doole to pine,
Yet did their heavy woe to stronger good
Yield place, and Semele the lovely tressed,
Rapt to her death amid the thunders rude,
Still liveth, the Olympians' cherished guest:
Pallas upon her waits with loving care
And Father Zeus right tenderly,
And her young son, who doth the ivy wear,
Surrounds her with his love eternally.
Ay, and they tell how on the ocean's floor
With Nereus' sea-born daughters Ino dwells,
For whom hath been ordainèd evermore
Unstinted life. No token sure foretells
Their term of life to mortals; nay, for none
A set time knoweth when in calm, with store
Of blessing added, we shall see outrun
The end of any day—the sun's own son.
This way and that way setting, Fortune's streams
Bear to mankind now the desire of dreams
And now the load of heavy toils.
Thus Destiny, that with a kindly hand
Guides the ancestral luck of them who hold this land,
To heaven-sprung joy decrees some tempering touch
Of refluent sorrow in the after-time.
Even so it was ordained of old, and such
Hath been their weird, since, lured to crime
Unwitting, Laïus' fated son
Toward the crossways sped
Where meeting with his sire he struck him dead
And Pytho's ancient rede fulfilment won.

When fierce Erinnys understood
That deed, she slew his warlike brood,
Turning on every son his brother's hand.
Yet after Polyneikes fell,

Thersander lived and bore him well
In battles for his fatherland
And proved in that return of strife
A new-engrafted shoot of life,
The saviour of Adrastos' race.
Whence of their line the root we trace,
And meet it is that now we sing
Ainesidamos' praise, and string
The lyre for him and chaunt the triumph stave;
For to his hands the prize Olympia gave
And Pytho saw him victor, while his brother,
In fortune such another,
The sister Graces at the Isthmus crowned;
For there the four-horse chariot he drave
To victory with the twelfth encircling round.
Good luck to find
After the strife attempted, brings surcease
Of care unkind:
And wealth's increase
By virtue glorified,
With fair occasion favours every side,
Lending to man thought eager and profound,
A star afar descried,
A light inspiring utter confidence,
If the possessor be but skilled to know
What shall hereafter be—
How guilty souls gone hence
To joint the dead, must pay the penalty;
For in the shades below
One bringeth into judgment every sin
Wrought impiously within
This realm of Zeus, and doth to each decree
The word of doom, by dire necessity.

But in that sunshine's equal ray,
Where night is one with perfect day,
The good a toilless life attain:
Not theirs with urgent hand to tear
The tortured tilth, or wring a bare
Subsistence from the watery main;
But with Heaven's honoured ones they find
The life devoid of tears assigned

To such as joyed their oaths to keep:
But for those others—suffering deep
Is theirs, too dire to look upon.
Then whosoe'er have steadfast shone,
With spirits steeled in virtue to abide
Thrice on the near and on the further side
Of death, to Kronos' tower have wended
Their way by Zeus attended:
There round the blessed isles sea-winds are blowing.
And there be flowers all-golden glowing,
Some, landward sprung, on gorgeous trees are growing:
The waters feed
The rest, wherewith those happy ones entwine
Their hands divine.
Thus they fulfil
The righteous will
Of Rhadamanthos, who their lot decreed.
Him at his side the Father loves to hold,
Even Kronos who of old
Espousèd Rhea, throned in loftiest state.
And in that company most fortunate
Peleus and Kadmos hoar
Are numbered and enrolled.
And thither, when to heed her pleading sore
The heart of Zeus she drew,
Achilles' mother bare him who o'erthrew
Hector, Troy's pillar stark,
Despair of fighters, and consigned the dark
Son of the Dawn to death, and Kyknos too.

Here, folded to my side I bear
Beneath mine arm, a quiver where
Lurks many a nimble shaft of song:
Each hath its message for the wise
But ah! to reach the general throng
For sure interpreters it cries.
Who then hath wisdom? He whose heart
Hath plenteous skill of inborn lore;
But whoso hath but learnt a part
Of many words can little more
Than chatter idly as the crow

That mocks the bird of Zeus divine.
Come then, my soul, upon the mark align
The arrows from your bended bow,
At whom, in gentle mood, are we to aim
Our shafts, bright-tipped with fame?
Lo! at Akragas I my bolts am winging
The while a true intent informs my singing,
Here to proclaim and swear in accents ringing
How for these hundred years
No township ere hath borne a man more free
In courtesy
Or generous hand
To his compeers
Than Theron, august ruler of this land.
But, on the heels of praise, full jealously
Presseth Satiety,
That hath no whit of justice on her side
But from men envious
She springeth, to arouse
The idle babbling utterance that blinds
The work of noblest minds.
Ay, as upon the ocean-beach the sands
Elude all reckoning, even so
The joys that others take at Theron's hands
Pass mortal skill their plenitude to show!

## Olympia IV

FOR PSAUMIS OF KAMARINA, WINNER IN THE MULE-CHARIOT RACE.

Thou that hurlest amain
The thunder of foot untiring,
Zeus most high, for thee be my strain;
For lo! with the subtle quiring
Of lay and lute, thy circling Hour
Commands my witness of song, to dower
The contests heaven-aspiring.
The news that friends with happy fortune meet

Layeth on generous hearts an instant touch and sweet;
Now therefore, son of Kronos, who dost keep
Ward over Etna's windy steep,
That muffles Typho's hundred-headed roar,
Receive now, I implore,
This triumph-band of mine, convened to sing
A victory Olympian, whose wing
The Graces sped; a light
To illume through deepest time a wide enduring might.
Sith for the honour of thy mule-drawn car,
Psaumis, to thee it draweth nigh,
What time thou speedst with Pisan olive crown
Glory to raise for Kamarina's town.
Now may the god right graciously
Favour our prayers for what is yet to be;
For him I praise as one whose zealous heed
Was chiefly for the nurture of the steed,
Who joyed in open hospitality
And set his pure mind ever to increase
The welfare of his city, and her peace.
From stain of lying words
My tale I'll hold aloof:
Trial, in sooth, affords
Of mortal men the proof.
This, this it was indeed
That from the slight of Lemnian women freed
The son of Klymenos, who, come apace,
Victorious from the brazen-harnessed race
To take his crown, cried to Hypsipyle:—
"My speed of foot you see;
My hands and heart thereto are no disgrace.
Nor chide my rathe grey hair,—
Such snows even youthful heads all unashamed may wear!"

# The Story Teller's Craft

## IV

## The Artist and the Public

By Arnold Bennett

### I

I CAN divide all the imaginative writers I have ever met into two classes—those who admitted and sometimes proclaimed loudly that they desired popularity; and those who expressed a noble scorn or a gentle contempt for popularity. The latter, however, always failed to conceal their envy of popular authors, and this envy was a phenomenon whose truculent bitterness could not be surpassed even in political or religious life. And indeed, since (as I have held in a previous paper) the object of the artist is to share his emotions with others, it would be strange if the normal artist spurned popularity in order to keep his emotions as much as possible to himself. An enormous amount of dishonest nonsense has been and will be written by uncreative critics, of course in the higher interests of creative authors, about popularity and the proper attitude of the artist thereto. But possibly the attitude of a first-class artist himself may prove a more valuable guide.

The *Letters of George Meredith* (of which the first volume especially is a magnificent unfolding of the character of a great man) are full of references to popularity, references overt and covert. Meredith could never—and quite naturally—get away from the idea of popularity. He was a student of the English public, and could occasionally be unjust to it. Writing to M. André Raffalovich (who had sent him a letter of appreciation) in November, 1881,

he said: "I venture to judge by your name that you are at most but half English. I can consequently believe in the feeling you express for the work of an unpopular writer. Otherwise one would incline to be sceptical, for the English are given to practical jokes, and to stir up the vanity of authors who are supposed to languish in the shade amuses them." A remark curiously unfair to the small, faithful band of admirers which Meredith then had. The whole letter, while warmly and touchingly grateful, is gloomy. Further on in it he says: "Good work has a fair chance to be recognised in the end, and if not, what does it matter?" But there is constant proof that it did matter very much. In a letter to William Hardman, written when he was well and hopeful, he says: "Never mind: if we do but get the public ear, oh, my dear old boy!" To Captain Maxse, in reference to a vast sum of £8,000 paid by the *Cornhill* people to George Eliot (for an unreadable novel), he exclaims: "Bon Dieu! Will aught like this ever happen to me?"

And to his son he was very explicit about the extent to which unpopularity "mattered": "As I am unpopular I am ill-paid, and therefore bound to work double tides, hardly ever able to lay down the pen. This affects my weakened stomach, and so the round of the vicious circle is looped." (Vol. I., p. 322.) And in another letter to Arthur Meredith about the same time he sums up his career thus: "As for me, I have failed, and I find little to make the end undesirable." (Vol. I., p. 318.) This letter is dated June 23rd, 1881. Meredith was then 53 years of age. He had written *Modern Love*, *The Shaving of Shagpat*, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, *Rhoda Fleming*, *The Egoist* and other masterpieces. He knew that he had done his best and that his best was very fine. It would be difficult to credit that he did not privately deem himself one of the masters of English literature and destined to what we call immortality. He had the enthusiastic appreciation of some of the finest minds of the epoch. And yet, "As for me, I have failed, and I find little to make the end undesirable." But he had not failed in his industry, nor in the quality of his work, nor in achieving self-respect and the respect of his friends. He had failed only in one thing—immediate popularity.

## II

Assuming then that an author is justified in desiring immediate popularity, instead of being content with poverty and the unheard plaudits of posterity, another point presents itself. Ought he to limit himself to a mere desire for popularity, or ought he actually to do something, or to refrain from doing something, to the special end of obtaining popularity? Ought he to say: "I shall write exactly what and how I like, without any regard for the public; I shall consider nothing but my own individuality and powers; I shall be guided solely by my own personal conception of what the public ought to like"? Or ought he to say: "Let me examine this public, and let me see whether some compromise between us is not possible"?

Certain authors are never under the necessity of facing the alternative. Occasionally, by chance, a genius may be so fortunately constituted and so brilliantly endowed that he captures the public at once, prestige being established, and the question of compromise never arises. But this is exceedingly rare. On the other hand, many mediocre authors, exercising the most complete sincerity, find ample appreciation in the vast mediocrity of the public, and are never troubled by any problem worse than the vagaries of their fountain-pens. Such authors enjoy in plenty the gewgaw known as happiness. Of nearly all really original artists, however, it may be said that they are at loggerheads with the public—as an almost inevitable consequence of their originality; and for them the problem of compromise or no-compromise acutely exists.

George Meredith was such an artist. George Meredith before anything else was a poet. He would have been a better poet than a novelist, and I believe that he thought so. The public did not care for his poetry. If he had belonged to the no-compromise school, whose adherents usually have the effrontery to claim him, he would have said: "I shall keep on writing poetry, even if I have to become a stockbroker in order to do it." But when he was only thirty-three—a boy, as authors go—he had already tired of no-compromise. He wrote to Augustus Jessopp: "It may be that in a year or two I shall find time for a full sustained Song. . . . The worst is that having taken

to prose delineations of character and life, one's affections are divided. . . . And in truth, being a servant of the public, *I must wait till my master commands before I take seriously to singing.*" (Vol. I., p. 45.) Here is as good an example as one is likely to find of a first-class artist openly admitting the futility of writing what will not be immediately read, when he can write something else, less to his taste, that will be read. The same sentiment has actuated an immense number of first-class creative artists, including Shakspere, who would have been a rare client for a literary agent. . . . So much for refraining from doing the precise sort of work one would prefer to do because it is not appreciated by the public.

There remains the doing of a sort of work against the grain because the public appreciates it—otherwise the potboiler. In 1861 Meredith wrote to Mrs. Ross: "I am engaged in extra potboiling work which enables me to do this," *i.e.*, to write an occasional long poem. (Vol. I., p. 52.) Oh, base compromise! Seventeen years later he wrote to R. L. Stevenson: "Of potboilers let none speak. Jove hangs them upon necks that could soar above his heights but for the accursed weight." (Vol. I., p. 291.) It may be said that Meredith was forced to write potboilers. He was no more forced to write potboilers than any other author. Sooner than wallow in that shame, he might have earned money in more difficult ways. Or he might have indulged in that starvation so heartily prescribed for authors by a plutocratic noble who occasionally deigns to employ the English tongue in prose. Meredith subdued his muse, and Meredith wrote potboilers, because he was a first-class artist and a man of profound common sense. Being extremely creative, he had to arrive somehow, and he remembered that the earth is the earth, and the world the world, and men men, and he arrived as best he could. The great majority of his peers have acted similarly.

The truth is that an artist who demands appreciation from the public on his own terms, and on none but his own terms, is either a god or a conceited and impractical fool. And he is somewhat more likely to be the latter than the former. He wants too much. There are two sides to every bargain, including the artistic. The most fertile and the most powerful artists are the readiest to recognise this,

because their sense of proportion, which is the sense of order, is well developed. The lack of the sense of proportion is the mark of the *petit maître*. The sagacious artist, while respecting himself, will respect the idiosyncrasies of his public. To do both simultaneously is quite possible. In particular, the sagacious artist will respect basic national prejudices. For example, no first-class English novelist or dramatist would dream of allowing to his pen the freedom in treating sexual phenomena which Continental writers enjoy as a matter of course. The British public is admittedly wrong on this important point—hypocritical, illogical, and absurd. But what would you? You cannot defy it; you literally cannot. If you tried, you would not get even as far as print, to say nothing of library counters. You can only get round it by ingenuity and guile. You can only go a very little further than is quite safe. You can only do one man's modest share in the education of the public.

In Valery Larbaud's latest novel, *A. O. Barnabooth*, occurs a phrase of deep wisdom about women: "*La femme est une grande réalité, comme la guerre.*" It might be applied to the public. The public is a great actuality, like war. If you are a creative and creating artist, you cannot ignore it, though it can ignore you. There it is! You can do something with it, but not much. And what you do not do with it, it must do with you, if there is to be the contact which is essential to the artistic function. This contact may be closened and completed by the artist's cleverness—the mere cleverness of adaptability which most first-class artists have exhibited. You can wear the fashions of the day. You can tickle the ingenuous beast's ear in order to distract his attention while you stab him in the chest. You can cajole money out of him by one kind of work in order to gain leisure in which to force him to accept later on something that he would prefer to refuse. You can use a thousand devices on the excellent simpleton. . . . And in the process you may degrade yourself to a mere popularity-hunter! Of course you may; as you may become a drunkard through drinking a glass of beer. Only, if you have anything to say worth saying, you usually don't succumb to this danger. If you have anything to say worth saying, you usually manage somehow to

get it said, and read. The artist of genuine vocation is apt to be a wily person. He knows how to sacrifice inessentials so that he may retain essentials. And he can mysteriously put himself even into a potboiler. *Clarissa Harlowe*, which influenced fiction throughout Europe, was the direct result of potboiling. If the artist has not the wit and the strength of mind to keep his own soul amid the collisions of life, he is the inferior of a plain, honest merchant in stamina, and ought to retire to the upper branches of the Civil Service.

## III

When the author has finished the composition of a work, when he has put into the trappings of the time as much of his eternal self as they will safely hold, having regard to the best welfare of his creative career as a whole, when, in short, he has done all that he can to ensure the fullest public appreciation of the essential in him—there still remains to be accomplished something which is not unimportant in the entire affair of obtaining contact with the public. He has to see that the work is placed before the public as advantageously as possible. In other words, he has to dispose of the work as advantageously as possible. In other words, when he lays down the pen he ought to become a merchant, for the mere reason that he has an article to sell, and the more skilfully he sells it the better will be the result, not only for the public appreciation of his message, but for himself as a private individual and as an artist with further activities in front of him.

Now this absolutely logical attitude of a merchant towards one's finished work infuriates the dilettante of the literary world, to whom the very word "royalties" is anathema. They apparently would prefer to treat literature as they imagine Byron treated it, although as a fact no poet in a short life ever contrived to make as many pounds sterling out of verse as Byron made. Or perhaps they would like to return to the golden days when the author had to be "patronised" in order to exist; or even to the mid-nineteenth century, when practically all authors save the most successful—and not a few of the successful also—failed to obtain the fair reward of their work. The

dilettanti's snobbishness and sentimentality prevent them from admitting that, in a democratic age, when an author is genuinely appreciated, either he makes money or he is the foolish victim of a scoundrel. They are fond of saying that agreements and royalties have nothing to do with literature. But agreements and royalties have a very great deal to do with literature. Full contact between artist and public depends largely upon publisher or manager being compelled to be efficient and just. And upon the publisher's or manager's efficiency and justice depend also the dignity, the leisure, the easy flow of coin, the freedom, and the pride which are helpful to the full fruition of any artist. No artist was ever assisted in his career by the yoke, by servitude, by enforced monotony, by overwork, by economic inferiority. See Meredith's correspondence everywhere.

Nor can there be any satisfaction in doing badly that which might be done well. If an artist writes a fine poem, shows it to his dearest friend, and burns it—I can respect him. But if an artist writes a fine poem, and then by sloppiness and snobbishness allows it to be inefficiently published, and fails to secure his own interests in the transaction, on the plea that he is an artist and not a merchant, then I refuse to respect him. A man cannot fulfil, and has no right to fulfil, one function only in this complex world. Some, indeed many, of the greatest creative artists have managed to be very good merchants also, and have not been ashamed of the double *rôle*. To read the correspondence and memoirs of certain supreme artists one might be excused for thinking, indeed, that they were more interested in the *rôle* of merchant than in the other *rôle*; and yet their work in no wise suffered. In the distribution of energy between the two *rôles* common sense is naturally needed. But the artist who has enough common sense—or, otherwise expressed, enough sense of reality—not to disdain the *rôle* of merchant will probably have enough not to exaggerate it. He may be reassured on one point—namely, that success in the *rôle* of merchant will never impair any self-satisfaction he may feel in the *rôle* of artist. The late discovery of a large public in America delighted Meredith and had a tonic effect on his whole system. It is often hinted, even if it is not often said, that great popularity ought to disturb the conscience of the artist. I do not

believe it. If the conscience of the artist is not disturbed during the actual work itself, no subsequent phenomenon will or should disturb it. Once the artist is convinced of his artistic honesty, no public can be too large for his peace of mind. On the other hand, failure in the *rôle* of merchant will emphatically impair his self-satisfaction in the *rôle* of artist and his courage in the further pursuance of that *rôle*.

But many artists have admittedly no aptitude for merchantry. Not only is their sense of the bindingness of a bargain imperfect, but they are apt in business to behave in a puerile manner, to close an arrangement out of mere impatience, to be grossly undiplomatic, to be victimised by their vanity, to believe what they ought not to believe, to discredit what is patently true, to worry over negligible trifles, and generally to make a clumsy mess of their affairs. An artist may say: "I cannot work unless I have a free mind, and I cannot have a free mind if I am to be bothered all the time by details of business."

Apart from the fact that no artist who pretends also to be man can in this world hope for a free mind, and that if he seeks it by neglecting his debtors he will be deprived of it by his creditors—apart from that, the artist's demand for a free mind is reasonable. Moreover, it is always a distressing sight to see a man trying to do what nature has not fitted him to do, and so doing it ill. Such artists, however—and they form possibly the majority—can always employ an expert to do their business for them, to cope on their behalf with the necessary middleman. Not that I deem the publisher or the theatrical manager to be by nature less upright than any other class of merchant. But the publisher and the theatrical manager have been subjected for centuries to a special and grave temptation. The ordinary merchant deals with other merchants—his equals in business skill. The publisher and the theatrical manager deal with what amounts to a race of children, of whom even archangels could not refrain from taking advantage.

When the democratisation of literature seriously set in, it inevitably grew plain that the publisher and the theatrical manager had very humanly been giving way to the temptation with which heaven in her infinite wisdom had pleased to afflict them,—and the Society of Authors came into being.

A natural consequence of the general awakening was the self-invention of the literary agent. The Society of Authors, against immense obstacles, has performed wonders in the economic education of the creative artist, and therefore in the improvement of letters. The literary agent, against obstacles still more immense, has carried out the details of the revolution. The outcry—partly sentimental, partly snobbish, but mainly interested—was at first tremendous against these meddlers who would destroy the charming personal relations that used to exist between, for example, the author and the publisher. (The less said about those charming personal relations the better. Documents exist.) But the main battle is now over, and everyone concerned is beautifully aware who holds the field. Though much remains to be done, much has been done; and to-day the creative artist who, conscious of inability to transact his own affairs efficiently, does not obtain efficient advice and help therein, stands in his own light both as an artist and as a man, and it is a reactionary force. He owes the practice of elementary common sense to himself, to his work, and to his profession at large.

## IV

The same dilettante spirit which refuses to see the connection between art and money has also a tendency to repudiate the world of men at large, as being unfit for the habitation of artists. This is a still more serious error of attitude—especially in a storyteller. No artist is likely to be entirely admirable who is not a man before he is an artist. The notion that art is first and the rest of the universe nowhere is bound to lead to preciosity and futility in art. The artist who is too sensitive for contacts with the non-artistic world is thereby too sensitive for his vocation, and fit only to fall into gentle ecstasies over the work of artists less sensitive than himself.

The classic modern example of the tragedy of the artist who repudiates the world is Flaubert. At an early age Flaubert convinced himself that he had no use for the world of men. He demanded to be left in solitude and tranquillity. The morbid streak in his constitution grew rapidly under the fostering influences of peace and tranquillity.

He was brilliantly peculiar as a schoolboy. As an old man of twenty-two, mourning over the vanished brio of youth, he carried morbidity to perfection. Only when he was travelling (as, for example, in Egypt) do his letters lose for a time their distemper. His love-letters are often ignobly inept, and nearly always spoilt by the crass provincialism of the refined and cultivated hermit. His mistress was a woman difficult to handle and indeed a Tartar in egotism, but as the recipient of Flaubert's love-letters she must win universal sympathy.

Full of a grievance against the whole modern planet, Flaubert turned passionately to ancient times (in which he would have been equally unhappy had he lived in them), and hoped to resurrect beauty when he had failed to see it round about him. Whether or not he did resurrect beauty is a point which the present age is now deciding. His fictions of modern life undoubtedly suffer from his detestation of the material; but considering his manner of existence it is marvellous that he should have been able to accomplish any of them, except *Un Cœur Simple*. The final one, *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, shows the lack of the sense of reality which must be the inevitable sequel of divorce from mankind. It is realism without conviction. No such characters as Bouvard and Pécuchet could ever have existed outside Flaubert's brain, and the reader's resultant impression is that the author has ruined a central idea which was well suited for a grand larkish extravaganza in the hands of a French Swift. But the spectacle of Flaubert writing in *mots justes* a grand larkish extravaganza cannot be conjured up by fancy.

There are many sub-Flauberts rife in London. They are usually more critical than creative, but their influence upon creators, and especially the younger creators, is not negligible. Their aim in preciosity would seem to be to keep themselves unspotted from the world. They are for ever being surprised and hurt by the crudity and coarseness of human nature, and for ever bracing themselves to be not as others are. They would have incurred the anger of Dr. Johnson, and a just discipline for them would be that they should be cross-examined by the great bully in presence of a jury of butchers and sentenced accordingly. The morbid Flaubertian shrinking from reality is to be found

to-day even in relatively robust minds. I was recently at a provincial cinema, and witnessed on the screen with a friend a wondrously ingenuous drama entitled "Gold is not all." My friend, who combines the callings of engineer and general adventurer with that of serving his country, leaned over to me in the darkness amid the violent applause, and said: "You know, this kind of thing always makes me ashamed of human nature." I answered him as Johnsonially as the circumstances would allow. Had he lived to the age of fifty so blind that it needed a cinema audience to show him what the general level of human nature really is? Nobody has any right to be ashamed of human nature. Is one ashamed of one's mother? Is one ashamed of the cosmic process of evolution? Human nature is. And the more deeply the creative artist, by frank contacts, absorbs that supreme fact into his brain, the better for his work.

There is a numerous band of persons in London—and the novelist and dramatist are not infrequently drawn into their circle—who spend so much time and emotion in practising the rites of the religion of art that they become incapable of real existence. Each is a Stylites on a pillar. Their opinion on Léon Bakst, Francis Thompson, Augustus John, Cyril Scott, Maurice Ravel, Vuillard, James Stephens, E. A. Rickards, Richard Strauss, Eugen d'Albert, etc., may not be without value, and their genuine feverish morbid interest in art has its usefulness, but they know no more about reality than a Pekinese dog on a cushion. They never approach normal life. They scorn it. They have a horror of it. They class politics with the differential calculus. They have heard of Lloyd George, the rise in the price of commodities, and the eternal enigma, what is a sardine; but only because they must open a newspaper to look at the advertisements and announcements relating to the arts. The occasional frequenting of this circle may not be disadvantageous to the creative artist. But let him keep himself inoculated against its disease by constant steady plunges into the cold sea of the general national life. Let him mingle with the public, for God's sake! No phenomenon on this wretched planet, which after all is ours, is meet for the artist's shrinking scorn. And the average man, as to whom the artist's ignorance is often

astounding, must for ever constitute the main part of the material in which he works.

Above all, let not the creative artist suppose that the antidote to the circle of dilettantism is the circle of social reform. It is not. I referred in my first paper to the prevalent illusion that the republic has just now arrived at a crisis, and that if something is not immediately done disaster will soon be upon us. This is the illusion to which the circle of social reform is naturally prone, and it is an illusion against which the common sense of the creative artist must mightily protest. The world is, without doubt, a very bad world; but it is also a very good world. The function of the artist is certainly concerned more with what is than with what ought to be. When all necessary reform has been accomplished, our perfected planet will be stone-cold. Until then the artist's affair is to keep his balance amid warring points of view, and in the main to record and enjoy what is. . . . But is not the Minimum Wage Bill urgent? Certainly. But when the minimum wage is as trite as the jury-system, the urgency of reform will still be tempting the artist too far out of his true path. And the artist who yields is lost.

# The Apostates

By Eden Phillpotts

## I

THERE is a border height on Dartmoor crowned with stone, where a face bulks enormous and stares unblinking into the eye of the setting sun.

The chisels of Nature carve slowly on granite, but once a masterpiece has been wrought, it outlasts many generations of mankind, and crumbles again so gradually that the stars may change their relations in heaven before the images beneath them pass away. Such things chance out of the forces of frost and tempest, at the stroke of lightning or earthquake. They may be the work of centuries, or the inspiration of a moment. They may be plastic—moulded by patient Time, as the potter moulds his clay—or glyphic —struck with a fury of seismic blows from the porphyry.

The great rock idols come and go; haunt lonely cliffs; crown lonely heights; gaze out upon the surges of lonely seas. Within man's ken they reign while countless ages lapse; but by Nature's mensuration, they exist only as faces in the fire, that suddenly peep from the flux and, in a moment, are shapeless cinders again.

This giant's head on the tor was smaller than the Sphinx and of an antiquity more profound. The countenance lacked majesty and was, indeed, malignant—not with the demoniac intelligence of 'Le Stryge' on Notre Dame, but rather with the brutish, semi-human doubt and scowling uncertainty of a higher ape. Its expression trembled on the verge of consciousness; it implied a being created near the end of that hundred thousand years' journey, after our ancestors, descending from the trees, set forth on the mighty march to conscious intelligence.

The face belonged to the forefathers of Palæolithic man: it was thus that pithecanthropus stared; but as science

continues to doubt whether the being from Java shall be called a man or an ape, so, before this statue, one hesitates. In truth the monster is neither ape nor man. But it claims closer kinship with early man than existing humanity, and its features, in their gaunt simplicity, must have appealed with no small force to one who might see himself reflected in them. For the monster burlesqued those beetle-browed, prognathous Neoliths of old time, and to them doubtless possessed an awe and grandeur we cannot grant him to-day.

How did it challenge men in the childhood of man?

One conceives the skin-clad dreamer coming upon it with the sudden force of a terrific discovery and standing in awe before the Titan. The gods of the hail and the hurricane he knew already, and the god that sent the levin. The gods that over-filled the rivers, buried the earth in snow; brought eaning time and the fruits of the earth—these he had worshipped fitfully from afar, as eternal, unsleeping forces having the power of life and death. But what was this granite Colossus, to be seen and touched, and on whose cheek the west wind played like a harper? Who was this mighty one close enough to be recognised, remote enough to be a mystery? His lidless eyes were ever on the stone men's lodges. Perhaps his mind was concerned with them. What were his powers and purposes? To conceive of him as Evil had been to drive the clan to madness; therefore the vast, yet vital, assumption must have been made that he was Good. Conscious intelligence, for its own comfort, claimed to have discovered an interested and benignant spirit.

Thus, then, did it challenge men in the childhood of man.

But there are children still, and the child is nearer than his father to prehistoric ancestors by many an age.

In the valley beneath this mass of granite with its featured front, there lay a cottage; and a mile distant, amid green crofts, a little farm was perched upon the hither hill. From the cottage on a day in autumn there came children two: a boy of twelve years and a girl of eight.

A haggard man bid them depart. He was but five and thirty, though he looked more—a long-necked, wizened labourer with his features meanly huddled together under

a low brow. Evident anxiety held him; but he spoke kindly to the little ones.

"Have 'e got the food, Bobby?" he asked.

"Ess, faither."

"That's right then. You and Milly can pick hurts all day, but don't you go too far—keep in sight of home and don't eat too many berries."

"Will the new baby be along afore us come back, faither?"

"Please God."

The man went into his house; Milly and Bobby set forth. But before they had gone a hundred yards the girl stopped.

"I ain't fed my bunny rabbit," she said. "Her'll be clemmed if I don't give her nothing."

They turned to the back of the cottage and reached a pigsty that stood there. Beside it was a hutch wherein sat a large black rabbit. On the top of the hutch was a litter of half dead milk-thistles, and Milly inserted a bunch, stroked her rabbit, kissed his nose, and then marched off.

They climbed aloft through the brake fern and heath, rested sometimes on a stone and chattered together about the new baby.

"I hope 'tis a boy and not a cheel," said Bobby.

"And so do I," declared his sister. "An' I wish I was a boy and not a cheel."

"I wish you was," answered Bobby, "and I wish the world was all boys. Because they grow up to be men, and they be more useful than women and better tempered. You never hear men scream out like they do. Women ban't no good, except for messing about in the house and getting the food and milking cows and such like."

But Milly promised to break away from these mean pursuits.

"I be going to kill pigs when I grow up," she said.

"Not you," he answered. "You'd go all davered, and fainty, and white as curds if you had to kill a pig."

"I've stood to it to watch faither," she argued.

"Anybody could watch," he assured her, "but if——" He broke off and chuckled at a memory.

"Last time faither killed one, I nearly died of laughing, because there was the pig all ready, and faither was looking

round everywhere for the knife and couldn't find it, and then he says all of a sudden, 'Where's that knife got to?' and with that it fell on the ground, because he'd had it held between his teeth all the time!"

They picked whortleberries and ate many, but filled one of the two baskets they carried. The other contained some slabs of bread and dripping and two slices of seed-cake. They ate together and presently began to play games. Then they watched the birds and the boy bit stems of brake fern, to show Milly the picture of an oak tree that the section revealed.

"'Tis a very wonderful thing and nobody can explain it," he said, "but there it bides."

They climbed presently to the tor at the top of the hill, and Bobby, looking up at the pile of rocks, suddenly marked the stone face, with its overhanging brow and deep-set eyes staring out upon the west. He had been there a hundred times before but never observed the image on the stone until that moment. It excited him greatly, for he was a boy not without imagination. His mind ever worked actively and peopled the world with many secret powers and personalities. Now his brown face brightened; he pushed the hair out of his eyes and stared for a full minute without speaking. Then he shouted to his sister, who was descending the hill.

"Milly! Come here this instant moment! A terrible wonnerful thing I've found!"

"I be going back to pick berries," cried Milly from below.

"Come here, I say—I order you!"

Thereupon she obeyed meekly, for when Bobby ordered, it was always understood between them that Milly obeyed.

"Look," he said. "Look up yonder 'pon the tor. What do 'e see?"

"I see nought but gashly gert rocks," said Milly.

That was all he had ever seen until to-day, but now he blamed her stupidity, since the light had been given to him.

"You little gaby! Where's your eyes to? A hugeous face it is—a proper face bigger than a haystack—nose, mouth, chin and all!"

She saw it and her eyes grew round.

"Oh, my! 'Tis like faither!"

"No it ain't. 'Tis a lot finer than faither. Look at the fearful eye of un, sunk so deep as a pit."

"I'm frightened," said Milly. "He be for all the world as if he was alive."

"'Tis like they images mother read about in the Bible," he declared. "Perhaps he be alive, come to think of it."

"Let's run," said Milly.

"No good running. He'd blow out of his mouth and scat us to shivers, I shouldn't wonder."

The boy took joy in picturing the powers of the monster.

"'Tis an idol," he said, "and the old people in the Bible said their prayers to the likes of him and got into proper trouble for it. But that's only because their idols was bad 'uns. Perhaps this is a good 'un."

"He don't look good," said Milly. "He looks like Farmer Bassett, when he catched us strubbing thicky plover's nest."

"Maybe something's vexed him," thought the boy. "It couldn't be us—we've done nought. Perhaps if we was to come and see him to-morrow, he'd be a bit easier in his mind."

"If he's cross, we'd better sloke off afore he sees us," answered Milly.

"He's seen us a'ready—you bet your life he has. I lay he sees everybody, though everybody don't see him. I believe he's a kind creature for all his fierce face."

Milly was dubious.

"He may be fearful strong," she declared. "He may be so strong as a pair of hosses."

"I wonder if he ever comes down. He'd shake up all Dartymoor if he did!"

"Come away," said Milly. "I be getting a very queer feeling. I'll cry if I stop."

"Say your prayers," said Bobby. "And I'll say mine. I order you."

Milly was going to kneel down, but he changed his mind and stopped her.

"Hold on! That won't do neither, because if he's a idol, he would be terrible niffed if we was to pray to somebody else. 'Twould be proper cheek to go saying our prayers to anybody but him right under his nose."

"I never heard of saying no prayers to anybody but Gentle Jesus," declared Milly.

"The Bible's full of it," he assured her.

"Come away then," she said, "and don't say no prayers. Whistle a bit—I'd feel better if you was to whistle. He needn't mind that, I reckon."

"How would it be if we offered to be his friends?" whispered Bobby. "He may be a good 'un, and if he was a strong 'un, he might be our side. And we often want somebody our side against faither. You mind how we prayed once for faither to die, and said the Lord's Prayer after and all, and nothing happened."

"We oughtn't to have prayed for faither to die," said Milly; "and we was glad when he didn't and took us to the doomshow.*"

"I wouldn't pray for nothing like that again," vowed Bobby; "but if we only prayed for proper things, it couldn't hurt nobody. And this here face haven't got nobody to pray to him, so he might have plenty of time to hear us."

"'Twould be wrong," said Milly.

"Why for?"

"You oughtn't to pray but to Gentle Jesus," she repeated.

"I don't see that," argued Bobby. "Gentle Jesus have got His hands full without me and you. Everybody be always at Him for one thing and another, and you can't expect Him to hear a couple of little squirts like us. But if this here gert chap be a real idol, so like as not he's just busting to help somebody and show his cleverness. He might be a proper friend to us, and none the wiser!"

Milly puzzled over the problem.

"Why should he list to us any more than Gentle Jesus do?" she asked.

"Because he ain't got nobody else to listen to," explained Bobby. "No doubt if a growed man was to come along, he'd be more pleased; but we might be better than nothing for him—just to show what he can do."

"We shouldn't be vexing Jesus?" asked Milly still in some fear.

"No," declared Bobby, "we should not. 'Tis odds He won't hear tell about it; and if He does, 'twon't trouble

* *Doomshow*=circus.

Him. We'll ask this here idol to be friends, and if he won't, there's no harm done. We've prayed a lot of prayers in our time as didn't hatch out nothing."

"'Tis you, mind, and not me thought of it," said Milly with caution.

"I ban't feared," answered Bobby. "If harm comes of it, I'll take the blame. We won't put nothing very hard afore him, for we don't know how strong he may be."

They considered, and it was Milly who proposed the benefit to be received.

"Ax 'un to let the new babby be a boy," she said, but Bobby was doubtful.

"That's wanting a good lot—a teaser I'd call it. But we can try him."

From awe they had now reached an attitude of friendly familiarity.

"What's his name?" asked Milly. "We can't say nothing to him until we know his name."

"For sure he's got a name," assented her brother, "but we don't know it, so we've got to invent a name. He'll understand. It ought to be a dreadful sort of name."

They knew no dreadful names.

Then Bobby had a bright idea.

"There's faither's swear-words—mother says they be dreadful."

He recited a few.

"Let's call him 'Bloody'!" he said.

"Mister 'Bloody' would be better," thought Milly.

"No," answered her brother. "'Mister' be a name for schoolmaster, or farmer. Ban't nothing fierce or grand to it. Us'll call him just plain 'Bloody,' and chance it. Kneel down and keep your eyes on him and tell out after me."

They knelt down and the boy prayed.

"Dear Bloody, we beg thee——"

"Dear Bloody, we beg thee——" piped the little girl.

"To let the new babby be a boy. Amen."

Milly echoed the petition.

"There," said her brother, "I reckon his eyebrow lifted a thought. I believe he's a live creature."

"We ought to do something for him," said Milly.

"Plenty of time for that. 'Tis his place first. Now us'll go down the hill."

They moved twenty yards and looked back.

"He's gone!" said Milly.

"Not him! He's there all right. I daresay he's working at the new babby now," answered the sanguine elder.

Milly went in some fear concerning the attitude likely to be taken by her own gods; but her brother heartened her.

"Carry it off with a high hand! That's what mother says to faither, when he comes home down-daunted. And that's what you've got to do."

They returned to the whortleberries and, when evening had come, tramped home again.

Their father was eating and drinking for the first time that day.

"Here you be," he said. "And brave baskets of berries, I see. That's good childer."

"Have the new babby come, faither?"

"So it have then—neat as ninepence!"

"Be it a boy or a cheel, faither?"

"A boy—a very nice little boy, and mother never better."

The children looked at each other.

"That's one to him then," whispered Bobby.

## II

Robert Bassett had other children than Bobby and Milly. But they were younger, and the eldest boy and girl kept their own counsels and felt little interest in Sally and Betty, who filled the gap between them and the new baby.

They were permitted to gaze upon the blinking atom and their hearts went out to it.

A new baby and a new god served to fill their leisure agreeably. They experimented with both and found that the new baby could see and touch, the god feel and apprehend.

They were gentle with both. Bobby judged that they must put no very hard duty on the graven image until he had got accustomed to them. He believed in the efficacy of prayer, and even hinted sometimes that the god might demand more than lip-service; but this was a dark saying to Milly and only future time dreadfully revealed its pur-

port. For the present they were reverent with 'Bloody.' He had begun well and in justice must not be pushed too far. They prayed that the baby might have blue eyes, after they knew he had, and they begged that their mother might get up out of her bed and be the same as usual. They prayed that Sally and Betty might not interfere with them and their comfort; they prayed for plum-cake oftener. Most of these petitions were duly answered, and, in addition, good fortune fell on Bobby, for he found a fisherman's knife by the river, and, though his father took it away from him, as being a weapon too useful for his hand, he gave Bobby a lesser knife of his own in exchange, and the bargain contented his son.

Then Milly, encouraged by the success of the new baby, ventured a secret prayer to 'Bloody'; but she did not tell her brother of this plea, suspecting that he might hold such a business too trivial for the god.

It concerned her big black rabbit, and she prayed that her pet might be permitted to have a family. But the big black rabbit was a buck, and the new god proved unequal to suspending Nature's iron laws in this matter. Milly was cast down; yet she knew that for our own good prayer is not always answered. She assured herself, therefore, though not without an effort, that the idol probably knew best.

Then trouble and terror like armed tyrants burst upon the cottage of the Bassetts, and the father, returning from his work at the farm on the hill, learned that the new baby was very sick.

He developed whooping cough, and the doctor, puzzling to understand the catastrophe, presently learned that the district nurse had come straight from a case of it. Then there was wrath and bitterness in the home, and the nurse went about the business which she managed so ill, while a battle royal began for the baby's life. But his parents were warned from the outset that recovery in such cases was rare. They made up their minds to face the worst, and did all in their power for the babe they had brought into the world.

A clergyman came to baptise the sufferer and seal him into safety. The operation was performed with a junket bowl, and he received the high sounding name of Douglas

Champernowne—for reasons hidden within the maternal mind.

The idol's responsibilities were thus suddenly and mightly increased; indeed, both Bobby and Milly felt a time of fearful test and trial had fallen upon them and their friend. Her prayers to 'Bloody' had served a little to lessen the girl's ardour of approach to the older gods; but after the failure with the rabbit, Milly had wavered and inclined again to Christianity. Now, however, Bobby explained that only whole-hearted worship and service would meet the gravity of the situation.

"You must put your trust in him, same as I do," he said. "You can't go tinkering about now. He'll know if you be praying to Gentle Jesus as well as him. It ain't what faither calls 'sporting,' and I order you not to do it."

So Milly became pure pagan again, and when the prayers of the church were asked for her baby brother on the following Sunday, she hardened her heart and did not say 'Amen,' but sent up her secret prayer to a stone. It was then, while Douglas Champernowne fought his battle for life on his aunt's lap (for she, a woman of experience, had come to her sister's aid), that Bobby felt the hour had struck and his new god must receive more than words. They were free to do as they liked at this season, and together went often up the hill and sank to their knees in the red fern at the god's footstool. Then they lifted up their prayers and their eyes to him, while he still gazed, stern-featured, mighty, impassive upon the west.

Then the baby grew worse and Bobby, feeling that the time must be short, held dreadful conversation with Milly and brought the horror of the situation home to her in a way that had not happened until now.

"We must do something," he said. "We must do the best we can do. He won't work for nought and he's full up with our prayers. We must give him something better than prayers. I was awake last night, while Douglas Champernowne whooped like an owl, and I was feared of my life every minute I'd hear mother scream out he was dead. And then it come into my mind that we must give 'Bloody' the very best we'd got to give. He wants a sacrifice, like them gods they tell about to church. And he must have it."

"What can us give 'un?" asked Milly.

"The best we've got to give," repeated her brother. "He won't be put off with less than our best. He knows all about us, and what we've got in our money-box and everything. But money ain't no use to him: he wants blood!"

Milly turned pale.

"I'm very sorry it's got to be so; but there's nothing else for it. He must have your bunny rabbit—that's one thing."

Her mouth went down and tears started to her eyes.

"What about you?" she said.

"I haven't got nothing alive. The best thing I've got in the world be the knife faither gave me for the one he took away. I'm going to give up the knife. I'm going to drop it down that dark hole in the rocks between Bloody's front paws. 'Tis all I can do. And your rabbit have got to be offered up and dropped down, too. I wouldn't order it for anything but the babby. If it had been Sally, or Betty, I'd not have ordered it, because your rabbit's better'n them; but for the babby, I order it."

She wept and could not be consoled; but she did not deny him. Her world was blank, for the joy and pride of her life would most certainly depart out of it with the black rabbit.

Bobby dwelt on his knife to comfort her, but she refused to be comforted.

"It's got to be," she said.

The baby still fought next morning when his brother and sister set forth upon their dark errand. Milly carried the rabbit and Bobby bore a sinister stick, which made the little girl's heart throb in her bosom.

He spoke cheerfully and doubted not that this mighty sacrifice would save their brother's life; but his own soul was heavy within him. He was sorry for the black rabbit and he was still more sorry for himself. Because his knife had performed its last useful action on earth that morning, when it cut the stick with which to destroy the second victim of the new god. Only by keeping their minds fixed upon the splendour of the reward, was the magnitude of the sacrifice bearable.

They came to 'Bloody's' footstool, and, bringing forth the knife, Bobby opened its blades one by one and took leave of them; then, with a stiff upper lip, he shut them

and dropped the weapon into a deep cleft among the granite rocks beneath the tor. They listened and heard it fall. Bobby sighed and looked up at the idol. From this standpoint the mighty face of it could not be seen, and only a blank and beetling precipice ascended above them.

"He's not there!" said Milly.

"Oh yes he is," answered the boy. "Only he don't show. He's there all right."

Milly kissed the rabbit good-bye; then she flung her apron over her face, as she had seen her mother do, when the sudden news of a brother's death reached her.

She called to Bobby to wait a moment, and threw herself down on the heather and stopped her ears. Thus she escaped the sacrifice, and when Bobby came and touched her shoulder, the dead rabbit, the stick that had slain it, and the knife were all in the dark breast of earth together.

They went down the hill while their tears fell freely. Each was comforted by the grief of the other, and Milly felt glad that Bobby, though a boy, could not hide his sorrow.

But when they reached their home, it was to learn that Douglas Champernowne had struck his flag and passed back to the void from brief and bitter incarnation.

## III

On the day that the baby was buried, life spurned its customary routine, and after returning from the funeral, Bobby and Milly had no difficulty in escaping and going upon the Moor without companions.

They roamed together in their Sunday clothes and black ties, bewailed their loss and hoped that another and more prosperous baby boy might presently bud and bloom within their home. Then, by accident rather than intent, they found themselves under the crown of the tor and at the feet of the idol.

"There he be—a-glaring and a-grinning, and don't care nothing for us!" whispered Milly.

They looked up to see the great face wet with rain and agleam in westering sunlight. They had loved the image best so of old; for as the sun sank, the stone would often

burn to the redness of dull fire for a season and justify its sanguinary name.

Bobby stiffened and looked upwards with hate.

"Beast!" he said, and Milly ran to thrust protecting arms round him.

"Doan't 'e, doan't 'e!" she implored. "You know what he is."

But the mighty one gave no indication of annoyance.

"Beast—beast—hookem-snivey beast!" rang out Bobby till the stone echoed. "And I wish to God I was strong enough to pull him down, and smash him, and mend roads with the coward!"

Milly still trembled; but nothing was done.

"I ban't feared—he can't hurt us. He can only kill babbies," asserted the boy. Then he worked himself into a passion and heaped the most insulting language at his command upon the fallen one. Milly, finding the idol helpless, egged him on. They flouted it, and then, picking up a stone, Bobby hurled it fair and square and smote the monster's jaw. Milly winced, but the heavens were upheld.

"There! And that's another for 'e, and I'd scat 'e to shivers if I could, you gert, cruel mump-head!" roared Bobby, while his sister gathered more stones for him, and, inspired by the magnitude of the scene, thought upon fresh indignities. Bobby fetched mud from a bog and bespattered both the granite deity and himself.

They made faces, spat on the earth and exhausted their ingenuity; then, much heartened, they turned their backs on 'Bloody' and left him discomfited and deposed for ever. Yet such was his sublime restraint, that one had judged the god must have weathered experiences at least as dreadful in times of eld.

The last and crowning affront came from Milly. The boy had bruised, the girl stung.

"We be going back to Gentle Jesus now!" she screamed.

# "Love-Letters to ____"*

"Loud I call to you, my love.
Surely you must know who is here, is here,
You must know who I am, my Love!"

"This gentle call is for you, my love, for you."
—WHITMAN.

## I

THE trees round our new home are beautiful. We are completely shut away from both sight and sound of our neighbours in a graceful, dim, green world of our own. Beyond is a glimpse of fields, and the distant chimney-pots of F—— seem so far away that it is difficult to believe we are but a few miles from Piccadilly Circus.

There are oaks and elms of quite grand dimensions and advanced years, handsome chestnuts, and copper beeches to make the heart leap. But best I love the grove of firs—most mysterious of all trees—that lies to the right of the house. One of my bedroom windows gives a glimpse of the little pathway through it, terminating in a group of delicate silver birches. When the sunlight shines through their leaves, along the pathway, divinely contrasting with the dark sentinel pines on either side—you cannot know how joyous life appears!

Then on the left-hand boundary of the estate is a long line of poplars. Do poplars mean anything to you? To me they are each a romance. Their delicate, straight branches, pointing upwards, seem full of the promise of adventure. I walk along the lawn at midnight sometimes, just to see them towering against the sky, and then I think of you, and it seems to me that a world that holds you and the trees is too good to bear the joy alone.

And then I want you to be there with me on the grass, in the night, looking at the poplars—your long, cool fingers

* *Copyright secured in the United States of America.*

suddenly clasping mine with that strange touch that makes me feel so mysteriously glad, so completely fulfilled.

Your hands seem to protect me. As our fingers clasp, the perpetual sense of struggling dies away. I feel quietly victorious—very quietly. As I stand holding your hand, I seem to think of a journey's end, of a harbour after long voyaging.

Yet my feeling for you is the wildest unrest. With loved men generally, a woman's most familiar feeling is the desire to put her head upon a kind, strong shoulder. With you I never think of rest or peace, or desire to be petted. I want just to stand quietly, holding your life-giving hands, looking into your mystic eyes—your wonderful, calm, steady glance flowing over me like healing streams. Your touch, your look, both are so cold, yet they recall only fire . . . at white heat.

And as we stand with linked fingers and eyes enchained, long minutes pass, perhaps hours, and still my eyes and hands are hungry. We do not speak and it is all so quiet, so still. One thinks of the thick gloom of the cypress, of the silence of an enchanted forest, and then suddenly one thinks of being slowly frozen to death in Hell.

Thus we stand beneath the poplars, in the night.

Then there is my wonderful cedar. He lives alone on a distant lawn, huge, dark, superb, a very emperor among trees. I always think of him as a live, masculine creature, centuries old, with an austere soul. Sometimes in my solitary walks at night I bow respectfully to him. How I would love to know his secret and what he is thinking of, all alone in his majesty! The children never play on this lawn; it does not seem to appeal to them, and I seldom take visitors there, I love the cedar too much to share him promiscuously.

On his upper branches he wears rings of cones that instantly recall fairies and elves. When I was a child I could never have rested until I had somehow got to the top and beheld these enchanting objects at close range. But—mercifully—my children have little imagination. Thus if they miss many of my subtlest joys, they are spared also my most rending sorrows.

I have not told you yet of my great friend, the big chestnut by the lily pond; nor of the old clipped yews, and

the famous holly hedge, the thickest in the county; nor of the monstrous Japanese laurel, of so huge a bulk that we cannot imagine how the middle of him can be kept clipped in that strictly globular form. I have christened him Falstaff, and await the spectacle of his next clipping with passionate interest. You must come soon and see all this joyousness for yourself. Not until you have seen and explored every corner of my home will it seem to be truly sanctuary.

Next week we cut the hay. The limes at the edge of the field will be in blossom. If I could sit with you in the hay beneath the flowering limes at noonday, how I should store all the sweetness of it up in my heart—for the winter time!

## II

A most delightful idea has come to me. I dare not send this letter I have just written to you, it is too like a love-letter, and you remember how cross you were to me about my first love-letter to you and the black anguish occasioned by the second and last. It was contrary to your standard of honour to receive such letters from a married woman, even me. Yet it gives me such intense pleasure to pour out my thoughts to you, especially now that we are living further apart and meet less frequently. So I shall write to you whenever I like, but I shall keep the letters and make a little book of them—"a little book of the great enchantment," and some day, when the miracle of miracles has happened, when the great gulf is bridged and you and I are together—you and I! . . . you and I! . . . you and I!—we will read it together in each other's arms—you and I! There will be harps in the air on that day, my lover, my friend! There will be choirs of nightingales, and showers of roses, and all the stars will fall and cover us—you and me! you and me!

## III

Oh, my dear! the purple glasses! How can I thank you for your gift, so exquisite in form, so precious in the thought of me implied.

You know I have been colour-mad since childhood, and

the love of purple has been a kind of frenzy with me. Since I met you I can enjoy it wholeheartedly without the dull pain that deeply-realised beauty always gives to one who has not found love.

And in the new home my desire for purple has found full vent. I often stay in bed much later than I ought to, for the sheer delight of my violet satin quilt against the oxydised silver bed, the purple draperies against my soft grey walls, and—joy of my heart!—the ashen carpet, with the touch of purple in the grapes wreathed around the border.

And now on the white Adam mantelpiece, over which hangs the antique, gilt-framed mirror found in Italy, I shall have the deep joy of seeing your purple glasses, bearing lilies!

They are very old, of course—not for many generations has glass been cut so cunningly. What colour! what rapture! I wonder what subtle stories they could tell of love-philtres, of strange, maddening wines—deadly drugs, fierce hours of delight, glorious madnesses. What dreams they give—your purple glasses!

I carry them from room to room. Oh, when I hold them up to the sunlight——!

Last night, when my door was locked, I arranged the white mantelpiece with the purple glasses holding lilies of the valley and your portrait in the plain brown frame. Nothing else. Above was the gleam of the mirror set in dull gold. It gave me one moment of sheer joy, and then I found tears slowly stealing down my face, the bitter tears of a lonely woman's longing.

Oh, my love! why is the world so wide for just two people?

## IV

I am never alone now. I do not speak of all the people about me, nor of the scores to whom I talk every week. But ever since you spoke those quickening words of love, you are with me.

I can see you so clearly: a tall, distinguished figure, expressing great dignity, and a certain austerity; thick black hair just faintly touched with silver, a firm chin, a wide,

intellectual forehead, the high brow of a thinker, the mystic eyes of a seer. They are strangely green in colour, the eyes—medium-sized, very steady in their direct gaze. At the same time gentle, yet keen, it would be difficult to express their wonderful effect of light. It is a veiled light—you are in all things subtle, my Love. And those eyes are so intensely alive, one gets the impression of tremendous vitality, of complete self-mastery. They are cold, yet with such a suggestion of fierce hidden fires—oh! it is impossible to explain them.

And then, surprisingly, in this face of a scholar and idealist comes the mouth of a voluptuary! Not red, or I should loathe you, but pale, passionate, curved, beautiful. Your lips were moulded to wring women's heart-strings, my Love. Oh, my Love! I cannot write of your lips. . . .

But most of all I am enchanted by your voice. It is the voice of my childhood's fairy prince who comes towards me as you speak, through the fields of arum lilies and purple iris. I can well believe the sweetness of it could woo a woman into Hell, and make of it Heaven for her. It is always so gentle and so quiet—music to me. I pray you may be speaking to me when I die. I can imagine slipping so easily and softly into the arms of "lovely and soothing Death," lulled into everlasting sleep by the magic cadence of my Lover's voice.

## V

Oh! you are gentle, my Love, you are beautiful. All that you do is good. The spell of your gentleness enchants me more and more. Why do poets and writers depict their so-called strong men violent, brutal, swaggering? Why do they not realise the compelling charm of gentleness and how great a strength lies in restraint, and calm. They give an impression of such feebleness beneath the bluster, as a person who shouts to make himself obeyed.

But you make me think of iron and marble, of a great pillar that my entwined arms cannot move, be their embrace never so passionate. And then, when you speak, your voice recalls honey and running water, and far-distant violins. But how impossible it is to express in words the things we

think loveliest. The limitations of our language are never so apparent as when I try to describe your voice. I must learn Italian, but even that would not help me much, no human language could. It would want some new, exquisite fairy tongue—no! fairy, too, is an absurdly wrong word. Shall I say, rather, it would need the grand language of a race of seers and poets—all of them children of great lovers—to express what I think of my Beloved?

## VI

To-day, a year ago, a tremendous event happened. You and I found each other. It seems strange that on a day that was to change both our lives irrevocably, the inner voice gave no warning. There was no strange sense of exultation or presage of destiny. We went our usual ways all day. In the evening I dressed, selecting my gown with no more than the usual care, though I took trouble with my hair, because Maize herself is so smart, and she and George are the kind of couple one does one's best for.

And then we met, you and I. For the first time in our lives we stood in the same rooms, heard each other's names, looked each other in the face. It was just an ordinary party, an ordinary introduction. And except that we liked each other at once and our conversation flowed immediately like that of old friends, all that we said was ordinary.

The extraordinary thing was that you made no special appeal to me—no particular impression on me!

Isn't it amusing! You—you of all created beings—my Man of Men, my pillar of iron and marble. You, with your carven lover's-lips, with the white fire in your seer's eyes, your voice of distant violins—to me you were actually just an ordinary, well-bred, charming man, such as I meet in scores every London season!

I smile and smile as I think of it. To others I suppose you are still the same. That's the funniest part of all.

To-day, as I look back, I bless the day and the hour, I bless the road that enabled me to reach our meeting-place, and the maker of the car in which I travelled, and the chauffeur that drove me. I bless the policeman who held up the traffic, the porter who took us up in the lift and the maid who opened the door. With all my heart I

bless dear Maize and her adorable husband—how can we ever repay them for the part they played in transfiguring our lives? Lastly, I bless your father and your mother—oh! profoundly, on my knees and from the depths of my soul, I bless and thank the mother who, in giving you life, thus discovered the whole meaning of life to me.

How undiscerning we foolish humans are! We talk a lot about being grateful for the love bestowed on us. Yet never of gratitude for the capacity for loving, nor for the greatest gift of all, someone whom we can really love—not just someone to care for; cats, dogs, or even parrots supply that need in thousands of meagre lives. To find the destined love on whom one can spend one's whole soul is the greatest good fortune that can befall. To love deeply is far more truly satisfying than to be ever so well beloved, whilst there is no greater boredom than to be adored by a person uncongenial to us.

So, Dearest and Best, every day I rejoice afresh that some seven years before my present incarnation, Nature in her bountiful mercy decreed the fashioning of a man-child destined to be the glory of my life.

And then for thirty-five years we lived apart, in the same city! I had known the F——'s all their lives, and you had been George's friend for some years. Any time during those years we might have met, but—it was not written. I was destined to live half my allotted span—just marking time until you came—to mate, to bear and rear children, until the hour struck that brought us together and my real existence began.

Without you, of course, the world could not go on—not my world. The sun would grow cold as burnt-out ashes, the moon would flicker out, the stars die. There would be no colour, no laughter, no music in the world. And as for me, I would lie down upon your grave, and Nature again in her bountiful mercy would softly take away the breath of life from one to whom it had lost all meaning.

## VII

Even that very first evening, when I saw nothing extraordinary about you, the touch of your hand at farewell affected me. All the way driving home I was shaking hands

with myself secretly in the dark, trying to recall that momentary magnetism just because it was pleasant. When I saw you again you actually disappointed me, and two or three meetings passed thus, until one day we found ourselves talking together in perfect communion of soul. It was a Sunday evening in February—how happy I was when I went to bed that night. An indefinable radiance seemed to have come into my life, a strange, new zest. Not for weeks afterwards did I understand what it meant nor connect it with you. For still my heart remained calm, my spirit in my own keeping, until that evening in April, when suddenly, without a single word, you took me in your arms and kissed me.

Oh! my Love, your kiss!

I cannot write of it. I only know that the great moment of my life was when your beautiful, carved lips touched mine, and my soul received a god. . . .

I felt no passion. No fleshly ecstasy could find part in such a wonderful moment of soul-union. I was only conscious of the intensest joy as I opened my eyes and smiled. We both smiled—do you remember?—we were so glad! You said: *"What are your eyes saying?"* And then I let my eyes tell you of my wonderful new-born love.

You have never kissed me since then, not even on that day in May when you told me, very quietly, that you loved me and that we must always be friends and try to help each other.

It is very, very hard to bear, my Love, but for the sake of your high ideal I have tried. The memory of that single kiss has had to mean to me all the hours of rapture, the countless moments, joyful and tender, that enrich the lives of happily loved women.

Not a day passes, but I recall it. But meanwhile, I only touch your hand in ordinary greeting. And the years pass, and already I have lost my youth, and every day takes a little more from me. And the years pass; and the years pass. . . .

## VIII

But it does not do to grumble; we have so much to be thankful for in that we have found each other at all. At least, I can look at you and talk to you. And then, too,

I can often serve you. What a mercy it is that sight is still free. A married woman is so hideously hemmed in by "*shalt nots*," it is quite curious that, long before this, some moralist has not pronounced it a crime for her to look at any man other than her husband.

Only in the rare moments when we are *tête-à-tête* can I satisfy the passionate desire of my eyes. I dare not look often at you when others are present lest the hunger of my eyes betray me. But when we are alone, I want to look at you all the time, and store up memories of the face so deeply loved to last me in the long barren days of separation. When we are at the theatre I often find myself forgetting the play, looking secretly at your profile. Sometimes you have the same need, but only seldom, as you are a man, and then our eyes meet and we smile at each other in our joy of togetherness. At such moments my fingers steal towards yours, but seldom do you allow yourself such weakness as to clasp my hand other than in formal salute.

You remember Symons' lovely lines: "I know that your hands speak to my hands, and my hands speak to your hands with an irresistible desire."

When I am away from you, I want only to see you. When I can see you, I yearn to touch you. When I touch you, I long for your embrace. So there is no rest from this longing of the soul and senses, this terrible hunger and thirst that men call love.

That you suffer too, I can plainly see. Only you never speak of it. You deny to both of us the relief and ease of speech.

Sometimes I hate your morality, I could curse your code of honour that decrees such torture for us both. No passion of merely the body could make me suffer thus. I have known what it can be at its worst, fierce and frightening, like streams of blood. I have known calm affection, great devotion. In the thirty-five years of my life that passed before I began to live, many blessings of human love have been showered upon me, but never before had I experienced this beautiful and terrible emotion, the dual passion of the soul and body.

It is given to few to realise, and those who know it not have failed to sound the depths of life. It is the great

adventure of the soul, the transcendent experience of the heart, and I imagine in its fulness it would also be the utmost ecstasy of the flesh.

Richard Garnett understood it when he wrote: "Then is love blessed when from the cup of the body he drinks the wine of the soul."

## IX

To-day I suffer. To-day I am in hell. No one could call me a jealous woman, could they? When you have Mrs. J——'s grapes and peaches at your tea-parties, when you wear a carnation that Mrs. A—— shamelessly buys for you in Piccadilly, knowing your love of flowers, I make no complaint, although I decline to share these gifts when you press them on me. It does not trouble we when Miss C—— earns your gratitude by her brilliant speeches at your meetings, or when charming clients far more subtly dressed than I can ever afford to be, sit for unnecessarily long hours with you, telling you their secrets. Unruffled, I watch you at parties—so witty, so charming—smiling, flirting, uttering countless falsehoods and making women unhappy. I have sufficient mastery over self to bear it all with serenity.

Yet every now and then I am snatched and flung into a raging torment entirely beyond all powers of description. No analogy of earthly things can convey one tithe of the torment. It can only be understood by the woman who deeply loves and may not give.

There it is—the poisoned sting of it. You are not mine—I am not yours. Our love has had no blossom and can bear no fruit. Our love is as a mighty tree, cut down in the spring time, before the flowering season. . . .

Is it Heine who said, "Whenever a great thought is born, there has been a Gethsemane"? How many Gethsemanes go to make a great love, I wonder?

## X

There is a little spirit visitant always hovering round me. He has put a spell on me; each day it grows stronger, and I am more and more conscious of it. I feel his little fingers on my face, in my hands, clutching my skirts. Some-

times I feel those little fingers at my breast, and then—a little mouth. Oh! those are terrible days. . . .

When I hurriedly seek distraction, he climbs on to my knees and puts his warm arms round my neck. They are so little and soft, but they hold me more strongly than iron bands. If I run away, he runs after me; I hear his little feet upon the floor, along the garden paths, and on the lawns. He likes the grass; on the grass he gallops—oh, so enchantingly! I see him plainly through my blinding tears. He has such strong, splendid legs. . . .

All day, all night, I hear his little voice at my heart, calling—calling—calling. The sweetness of it no words could convey, and yet it pierces my soul with an intolerable sorrow, too bitter, O God! too bitter for bearing! The words are always the same. . . .

"*Mother! Mother! Mother!*"

It is your child, my Love. Our little spirit-child, asking—praying—for the life we are forced to deny.

* * * * * *

I try to think of my other children, the dear little sons and daughters whose merry laughter I can hear at this moment. They, too, are fine and sturdy, they are healthy and happy, loving and good. But they are not yours, my Love—not yours, and so it is they who are unreal—just ghosts, though romping so noisily on the lawn—only ghosts! It is the little spirit visitant calling at my heart who is my only real child. He alone is dowered with the sole true Right to Life—that is, being begotten and borne in deep, tender, and passionate love.

* * * * * *

Sometimes at night he lies in my arms. Oh, he is so dear, so soft, so warm—our little child! Generally I call him my little boy; sometimes my little girl, but always the baby is most heavenly-sweet.

I clasp him tightly in my arms, and so real is the vision that I can truly feel the warmth and roundness of his perfect little body. He is strong, without spot or blemish, this beautiful fruit of love, and oh, my Heart! he has such long, long curling eyelashes, and beneath, of course, are

your eyes, the strange green of my adoration—yours, yours! but with the child-spirit shining through. All of him is yours, he is true son of My Man. . . .

They are such happy hours when it is all real to me. I hug him in my arms and sing with joy; and then I show him to you, and I watch your slow smile of delight as his little hand clasps tightly around your first finger, and you say, as all fathers have said and ever will say: "How the little beggar grips!" We stand together rejoicing in our child, and then sometimes you put your arm around me, and your eyes grow very tender and very solemn as you softly thank me for the great gift of my womanhood, and with happy eyes I thank you for the kingly gift of your fatherhood. And then our lips meet in the most sacred of all kisses—the embrace of a mother and a father over their first-born.

Oh, my God! it can never happen! It can never happen! It can never happen!

Oh, God! have mercy on me! Let me die! Take me quickly from this world of torture and hell—take me from the lover who is so cold and cruel, from the child I may not bear. Bury my love-racked body in the deepest grave on earth, and let my love-torn soul be wrapped in everlasting sleep, never, never again to incarnate.

It can never happen! It can never happen!

## XI

There must be something wrong about a world where a love like mine for you can go unfulfilled. There must be something wrong about the laws and conventions that decree so magnificent a thing should be suppressed.

Is there then no hope—no hope at all for us, Most Dear One?

No hope, of course! We must each get what little good we can out of it, in a colourless sort of way, and for the rest—crush it down, says the Law, drive it from your lives, tear it out of your hearts . . . and if your heart-strings break, what is one more broken heart among so many?

And so the good, glad love is thwarted, maimed; the

splendid passion destined to be the supreme joy of two of God's creatures is turned into a scourge—a sword—a bitter, bitter cup.

Is it right, my Love? Is there no better way?

Does God, the All-Loving, really wish this thing, do you suppose?

## XII

They are hard, the women of to-day; again and again this conclusion is forced upon me.

This afternoon I met Mrs. L—— E—— at a literary party. You know what an exquisite tenderness breathes through all her work. She has a great charm of manner and her voice is gentle and sweet. She fascinated me at first; I let myself talk freely to her, and she seemed to respond. Then, gradually, a faint chill crept over me, and presently I realised that no spark of sympathy could be struck from her, that there was no great mother-heart concealed in her, as her books had led me to expect; all was hard—hard and self-seeking. I shrank back into my shell, wondering.

Above all things I must not let myself grow hard, nor my trouble make me bitter. The woman you love must be always truest woman—gentle, tender, kind. I can imagine such a situation as mine creating a great well of bitterness in the heart as the months and years go on—a well that it would take many lifetimes of love to fill up. But this must not happen to *your* woman.

Whenever the pain becomes too intolerable and one of my awful moods of despair descends on me, blackening all the rare sweetness with which your presence has illumined my days, then I remind myself of what my life would be like without you. But the imagination cannot picture such an extremity of desolation, my mind remains blank.

In truth my days are all you and nothing but you. Every morning, immediately I wake, I think of you with a thought that is a prayer. All through the day my thoughts go out to you like prayers—blessing you, wishing you well. I kiss you always in thought as soon as I awake. My spirit kisses your sweet, cold eyes, and sometimes, if I feel strong enough to bear it calmly, I kiss also your beloved lips:

and I talk to you in a whisper, very lovingly, may be very foolishly—yes, certainly very foolishly!

Directly I get up I go to each window in turn and say "Good morning" to my trees; the sight of them all around the dew-drenched lawns always lightens my heart, and you are with me all the time. If the sun is shining, I rejoice with you; we join in our adoration of this greatest of all gods. If it is raining I remember how easily you catch cold, and am concerned for you. When I pour out the morning tea, I find myself hoping that whoever is looking after you has remembered to put the milk in first. And so on, all through the day my little tender thoughts go out towards you, each winged with its burden of unutterable love.

At night you never come to me. I try to think you do, but it never seems really true. In vain I shut my eyes and my spirit summons yours. I tell myself you are there, but all the time I know it is a pretence; my empty arms bear mournful witness.

But the other night suddenly you came. I suppose in some rare moment of weakness, you must have let down the iron barriers of your will and sent love-thoughts out to me. All at once your dear presence was vivid and real. It was like sudden music in my loneliness—like the flashing of glorious colours—clouds of purple and rose, silver-streaked, sun-illumined.

You held me so tenderly. . . . You were so sweet. . . .

The last thing at night I look once more out of all the windows—the garden is even more gracious at night, whether in soft darkness or in the glory of moonlight. The outlines of the trees comfort me inexpressibly, and I always feel as I look at them that the last little prayer I whisper over the fir-grove must be answered. It is always the same prayer, the one that goes up daily from millions of women's hearts, that passionate plea for just a little joy before it is too late.

*Before it is too late!* Too late, most sorrowful of phrases: before the horrible death of beauty that all women dread as fanatics dread hell-fire, before the breasts shrivel, and the limbs shrink, and the soft cheeks are seamed, and the bright eyes grow dim, and the red lips pale and wither, and all desire fades from the eyes of men. *Too late!*

Only well-beloved women can calmly contemplate growing old. It is the unloved, the unfulfilled, to whom it is so terrible.

Sometimes, on my bad nights, I look in the glass and think how few love-years there are left to me, and with what mad speed they are flying—empty! The worst times of all are when, together with this dreadful, deadly thought, comes the presence of my little spirit visitant with his soft, clinging arms, his tiny torturing hands, and his little voice that calls and calls and will not be soothed to silence. On these nights I envy the drunkard and the morphineuse. By these bitter, bitter nights that might have been so fair I know there can be no hell hereafter—no, not for the greatest sinner. Hell is here.

## XIII

When I am inclined to rebel, I try to picture the time before you came into my life. Doubtless I was happier in the material sense, certainly I was more gay, more easily able to snatch joy from trivial matters. But it was mere existence, I did not live, and every now and then some poignant realisation of life's deep beauty wrung my heart with the knowledge of my spiritual barrenness. To them who know not love in all its fulness, beauty has often no gift but supreme pain.

On the surface all was smooth and bright, but far, far below, great depths in me were calling, and the hungry soul in me waited and starved and struggled for life.

Then you came, and in loving you I found and saved my soul. In loving you I looked Life in the eyes and laid my head upon the breast of Joy. In loving you I built for myself a temple of delight with a beauty that no tongue can tell of.

There I have lived ever since, on my knees before the altar that bears your name.

Dearest, I bless you and bless you. May God be merciful and kind to my Man of Men.

The word "dearest" used not to be a favourite endearment of mine, but it is the only love-term you have ever used to me, so consequently now most sacred in my eyes.

On that unforgettable night when you spoke the words

that transfigured my world, you said it twice, in soothing me: "Yes, Dearest, I understand." "I know, Dearest—I know."

Not a day has passed since that I have not said them softly to myself, recalling the caress of your voice. They fall upon my wounds like exquisite cold water. From the memory of your love-words I draw new life.

"*I love you.*"

"*Yes, Dearest, I understand.*"

"*I know, Dearest—I know.*"

Three sentences and a single embrace—out of these I have built my brave Palace of Delight—my glorious Temple of Joy. With these I have changed the world.

Truly the ways of a woman's heart are wonderful!

## XIV

A French poet has written: "Nothing is possible without woman . . . it is only through woman that we see God." For me it is only through you, my Love, that I see God, and I realise more now than ever before the beauty of the Infinite Goodness which is "Love, Truth, and Life," in other words—God. Love for a woman is the great destroyer. In its burning fires everything else perishes—religion, principles, the ties of blood—are all devoured. Having received the love-flame in her heart, henceforth she becomes its slave. Nothing else has any part in her, and this is one reason why love often makes women non-moral—in the sense of recognising no other obligations but those of love.

When I walk among my trees and survey my charming home, when I consider how my husband respects me, how my children love me, I feel, in reaction to my moods of rebellion, a great thankfulness to you, Beloved, that I can look the world in the face. . . . How many men would have treated me as you have? There is none like my Love!

You know I am absolutely yours; to give myself entirely to you would mean for me a happiness so deep, so sweet, so intoxicating, that I tremble all over to my inmost heart at the very thought. It is only your iron will, your high sense of right and of honour that has saved me from the divine damnation of love. It is you who are good, Dear

One, not I. Oh! how wicked I could be for you! For you I would commit any crime, sink to any depths and count my shame as glory. For you, through you, I could soar to any heights.

I love to think of myself as your slave. I wish we lived in other climes, other ages, that I might really be your slave, and kiss your feet, and lay all I had before your throne. Your cruelty would make me happier than another's worship. I would rather you strike me than another man kiss. Even a blow would be sweet to me if given by your dear hand. . . .

Oh, this is not right! I ought not to feel like this. I'm afraid I am very bad for you, my King! If I were your wife. . . .

Your wife! There are some things I could not endure. Your death, yes—you would be always with me then, and Death is everyone's best friend—but your marriage, no! impossible! I could not live through the day that gave you to another woman in the sight of the world. If my heart did not break of its own accord, as, of course, it would, I should swiftly summon kindly and comforting oblivion to my aid. The Valley of the Shadow, with all its terrors, would be a place of great joy compared to any earthly habitation on my Love's wedding-day.

Do not forget—never forget! your marriage bells would be my funeral knell just as surely as if you yourself thrust a knife into my heart.

## XV

You will not be annoyed, I hope, but I have confided in Amy S——. It was necessary for me to do so, as I could no longer bear the pain alone. I said I was not a jealous woman, and all my life I have truly believed this, but now I know that all women are jealous—when they love. And day by day I have been getting more jealous and restless. I hate Mrs. A—— and her carnations. Why should she give you flowers? To *buy* flowers for a man—what could be more shameless? I love to give you what grows in my garden. The rose-tree of your choice is my special care throughout the summer as the violet-frame in the

spring, and all the year round I pester the gardener about the carnations—all for you. But to buy flowers for a man is another matter. I call it unnatural. Mrs. A——, with her grand trophies from Solomon's, shared with you—the same flower on your breast and hers—it sickens me. She is so pretty, too, with that quiet, dark fascination that I know appeals to you. And she is much younger than I—horrible fact! And above all, she is free. You never talk of her, but seem, so my jealous fancy tells me, to avoid the subject when I sing her praises, watching your face in anguish.

There are so many women round you, sometimes it all hurts me *too* much. Of course, you give me no real cause for anxiety; on the other hand, how can I know that you still care? Week follows week, and month succeeds month and you say nothing; I watch you narrowly; I weigh your words and ponder them again and again, trying to extract some hint of love that will bring a ray of comfort to my pain.

Richard Garnett, who writes so wonderfully of love, says: "Sometimes love's touch means more than love's embrace." That's what I miss most of all—the touch of love. One can weave words for oneself, put all sorts of tender speeches into the Beloved's mouth; the imagination can run riot in embraces, picturing the utmost ecstasy, but nothing can make up for this complete absence of love's little touches and thrilling contacts.

If I were free to touch you when I chose, to link arms and press yours to my side, to hold your hand, sometimes to put my lips to the hollow of the palm, to throw my arm carelessly round your neck, stroke your hair, lay my head when tired on your shoulder—if you and I could do these little things to each other, it would make all the difference in the world to me—the difference between darkness and light. I believe I should be quite happy then.

In the early days when you were feeling your way to me, I have often heard you say that the second best would never content you. Because I cannot be your wife, you will not take me as your lover in the fullest sense of the word, nor yet as a sweetheart, nor even establish between us the sweet, slight intimacy of the casual touch. And yet I know you want me just as much as I want you. Only

you are good and strong and iron-willed, and oh, so moral! whilst I am frail and weak and love-torn.

I think of the waste of joy. . . . All the great dulness of this world, the immense, vast dreariness, the monotony, the unrest—ah, the terrible unrest! and then piercing through it all the exquisite flame of love, dispelling all the gloom, lighting up the whole life so brilliantly. . . . *Cover it up, veil it, hide your eyes from the light.*

It is a waste, isn't it?

But I know how you feel, most Dear: with love nothing stands still. Clasped hands lead to locked lips; the touch of love would soon make us sweethearts, and sweethearts become lovers, and to be the lover of a married woman is the accursed thing to a man of your calibre. I know, my Dear, I know. . . .

All this time I have not told you of my talk with Mrs. S——. I went to her one day, thinking of the splendid violets in your buttonhole. They are obese, bloated, beside my scanty little home-grown ones. I was so full of misery that it seemed to emanate from me. Dear Amy, with her atmosphere of gentle radiance, seemed to draw my secret from me. I told her everything, it gave me such heart's-ease. She held my hand as she listened, and into her soft eyes came two tears.

"My dear, I understand so well," she said, "I've been through it all myself. I know how it maims and wrecks us, but men are different you know, it means so much less to them. They don't understand, they know not what they do."

It comforted me so much to talk about my love after all these long months. I knew she would keep it absolutely secret and that you would not grudge me the relief of just one confidante. I loathe the idea of degrading the sacred name of love by idle chatter as so many women do, but this quiet talk with a gentle and grave woman like Mrs. S—— I felt was a good thing to have.

But it surprised me very much when she said: "How strange that you should give him all that—a woman like you!"

"To you, I suppose, he's just an ordinary man?" I asked.

"N-no," she answered musingly. "He's too upright

to be exactly ordinary, but of course I see him as the world sees him—a dear, of course, but just a *little* priggish and *précieux*."

You, my love, *you*!

"And though he has a charming manner, and there's certainly something distinguished about him, he doesn't *look* the hero of romance, does he?"

I tried to explain that in my eyes you did, and then a remembered fragment from one of Meredith's novels came to help my halting speech: "*So kingly was he, arrayed in the thunder of the bolt that had struck the pair.*" That is it exactly, the thunderbolt of love has made you in my eyes for ever the most splendid of men.

"How tremendously proud he must be of having won such love, and from you," she said, when I had explained. "That is a distinction for any man."

It amused me so much that anyone should think like that of me, where you are concerned. I could but laugh and wonder.

## XVA

Next to being with you, my greatest joy now is to shut myself away from everyone, in my beautiful flower-filled room, at dusk, with only the thought of you for company.

The thin Russian cigarettes; the soft cushions of my long purple lounge drawn up to the hearth; no other light but the fire; no other companionship but the scent of the flowers and the great flame of my love: this is happiness, or rather, as near as I can get to it without your actual presence.

I want no one else but you. My love wraps me round as with a mantle of fire, shutting off all the world, entirely possessing me. It is an extraordinarily violent emotion, this wonderful passion of mine.

Secure in my solitude, I give myself up completely to you. I take off my mask, and let the glorious wild thoughts rush over me. I think: first, of being quite, quite alone with you in the utmost seclusion, in some far-distant spot—you and I. You take me in your arms, and at last I am at rest. I can touch you: at last I can touch you. My hands have been so hungry to touch you; oh! the ecstasy

of satisfying this frightful hunger of the hands! I have ached for you so, and you are here now, you are mine, you are mine!

And then you kiss me. No pen can describe the rapture of our meeting lips. The red thoughts surge through my brain, my joy in you is too great, too altogether overwhelming for one mind, one body to express. I feel my spirit must burst from its prison in the utter madness of our embrace, the "sweetness keener than a sword, joy like a sudden spear."

What a beautiful end that would be to all the longing and striving—to die of sheer joy in my Love's arms, and as one died to live a thousand enchanted lives beneath his lips. . . .

I wind my arms closely around you, and hold you as tightly as I can, putting all my strength into the clasp. Some power quite outside me seems to do this, not me, and never before in love have I felt this need: the arms laid softly, quietly round the sweetheart's neck, that is all I can remember of far-off other loves—a passive submission, perhaps a gentle patting of the shoulder, or stroking of the head, kisses taken and given with wide-open eyes. But with you I involuntarily shut my eyes, and I want almost to kill you by the passion of my desiring arms. . . .

Yes, I would like to die beneath your lips, and to crush out your life, too, with my embrace. If they were kind, they would burn our bodies together in the same purple coffin, our heads resting on a pillow of pansies. Then at last I could lie in your arms for a little space; at last your dear head could lie on my breast, as I have so longed to pillow it. Oh, dying would be well worth while! And how I should rejoice to see my poor love-racked body—so useless, because it has brought you no delight—to see it consumed in clean, beautiful flames, locked in your arms!

Do you remember, quite early in our friendship, that time we were driving to the House of Commons in a taxi-cab, and suddenly you took my hands and held them very tightly, and said, entirely irrelevantly, "*You* could be savage in love." It was one of the few occasions you ever let your eyes speak. I had to look down at our clasped hands, I could find no words. And then you released my

hands and resumed your talk of politics in the coldest possible voice.

*Savage*—what a tame word for my great, mad love! And yet all think me such a quiet, gentle woman.

Thus I dream of you in the firelight while the thin blue smoke curls above me. Sometimes it makes me intensely happy, at others I weep bitterly and bite the purple cushions, and writhe in an anguish of despair at the thought of how hideously Destiny has cheated me.

The scenes of our imagined life together pass endlessly before me: passionate hours of wild love-madness, hours of deepest tenderness, of "sweet, sisterly hand-in-hand" serious hours when we talk of your career and make plans for the future, and such glad hours when I am able to work for you, to serve you in some way. Then there are delightful times when we discuss books and art and life, matching our keen wits—there are always such endless subjects of conversation between you and me; and often we have our spells of irresponsible gaiety, when we play games, tramp the country roads together, and "lark" as if we were boy and girl again.

And all with you, my own Companion—dear mate of my heart, and soul, and mind, and body—always, always with you, and every hour irradiated with the divine happiness that can only be realised by perfectly mated lovers, living together. What a splendid thing we could make of life, you and I. What a palace we could build to leave behind us!

At your feet I pour out my magnificent love. Must it all be wasted—all but the little bit that helps to inspire you, and that prevents me from taking my life?

All wasted!

(*To be continued.*)

# The Symposium Club

By Richard Whiteing

THE latest birth of time is the Symposium Club. It proceeds by negations, yet these synthesize into the perfect affirmation of all that is worth having. Our only rule is that there are no rules, in fact "no nothing," that may prevent a dozen or so from gathering at a round table once a month, for a talk on things in general, and a cut from the joint. We meet in the rooms of a genial recluse who has hardly broken the bounds of his Inn of Court for a score of years. The limit of membership is fixed by the circumference of the board, and of one waist. We might run to the full dozen, but for the fact that our latest addition is that well-known man of letters, Dr. Bulkeley, who takes up more room than his share. Pending his drinking the waters, eleven is the count. We tried to balance him for twelve, at omnibus size, with another member, Lucian, whose diet is but the grass of the field, and with a lean visitor up for election. But there was no making a fit of it, so the latter is still waiting his turn.

The talk the other night was about the impending fate of all the censorships. Of course, as there is no "subject," it came up entirely by chance. Lucian was in great form on the lines of his simple rule that everything is right, when it happens to be something that everybody else calls wrong. This was the way he led off:—

"A censor pretending to protect morality is like a child pushing the cushions of a railway carriage to give itself the sensation of making the train travel at sixty miles an hour. It is immorality, not morality, that needs protection: it is morality, not immorality, that needs restraint; for morality, with all the dead weight of human inertia and superstition to hang on the back of the pioneer, and all the malice of vulgarity and prejudice to threaten him, is responsible for many persecutions and many martyrdoms."

At first this promised to reduce the whole gathering to the condition of a solemn silence meeting, for nobody seemed to have a word to say on the other side. Then an invaluable member, known as "The Forlorn Hope"—F. H., for short—who is always at hand to save us from such a catastrophe, broke in:

"You may do what you like with the censorship of plays; but what about the censorship of books, never more flourishing than it is to-day?"

VOICES: "Oh, come now!"

F. H.: "I know what I'm talking about. Every book or booklet that comes out has to pass two boards of examiners before you see a word of it in print, and one after that."

"Name! Name!"

F.H.: "Well, to take them at random—the Circulating Library and its committee of tea-tasters. Don't forget that Grand Inquisitor of the publishing house, the Reader, always ready to break out into a sort of rash of banned books. What a tussle this last one—libraries *v.* authors—all suppressing their mutual hates for the moment to form a sort of Balkan League against the terrible Turk with the pen. For me there are only two champions in the field, Mr. Maxwell and his deadly opposite, the clergyman. All the others are but barking at their heels. Each stands for an absolute—the novelist for "I want to write what I like," the parson for "I want you to write what you ought." The difference is as old as the planet or as man's introduction to it, as an issue between "Duty stern daughter of the Voice of God," and "Go as you please." The parson has his case: don't forget that. He proclaims that the Flesh is so aggressive that nothing can keep it in check but the highest and driest doctrine of the supremacy of the spirit, with its ideals of purity and self-denial. Our greatest glory in regard to some things is quench desire, even desire for knowledge in its sense of a conscious bias towards the satisfaction of the Flesh. The Flesh will always take care of itself. The things that won't are the intuitions of that higher self, a purely manufactured article, the product of thousands of years of ordered life wrought by fastings, prayers, visions, and at need the hair shirt and the knotted cord. The aim is the new birth into innocency and the

early Eden of the immaculate mind. Logically, therefore, our cleric's serpent of Eden is the novelist or playwright who is all for knowing, and for making known—for dotting i's and for speaking his mind. Father Ibsen, Grant Allen, Shaw, Hichens, and Wells, as our British contingent, and their echoes, the latest batch at the bar: and for the other side of the water, Hauptmann, Sudermann, Strindberg, and a host of others, not omitting the French file, with Brieux as corporal. For Mr. Westerdale this second Fall of Man is closely following the lines of the first in being wholly due to the craving for the useless knowledge whereof ignorance is bliss. The conflict goes down to the very roots of principle. Pulpit cries to Pen, "Come over and help us in this 'pull devil, pull baker' over the right to know, where knowing is a temptation and a curse, and, on the other hand, the right to chronicle every infirmity of the decadent mind."

A Voice: "What's it all about? I haven't read a line of it for my part."

F.H. (*extracting cutting from his pocket-book*): "More shame to you. Listen to the heaviest count of the parson's indictment as it stands in extract from Mr. Maxwell:—

'The wild, bad fancies of his adolescence came thronging upon him. Imagination and fact entangled themselves; the past and the present fused, and became one vast, throbbing distress. He thought if he crept beneath the window and called to her, she would answer his call. If he told her to do so, she would come out in her nightdress—she would walk bare-footed through the fields, and plunge with him into the wonderful wood. If he told her to do it, she would go into the stream, and dance and splash—realising that old dream: the white-bodied nymph of the wood for him to leap at and carry off into the gloom.'"

F.H.: "The parson is going to be beaten, not a doubt of that. The age is all for the full liberty of prophesying in regard to all forbidden things of the ancient codes."

Voice: "The age, boo!"

F.H.: "Keep your temper. Was there ever such another age since the Renascence for the gravity of its charge for good or ill? An age of all the old harmonies in politics, literature, science, and art reeled off into a new setting of ragtime? Yes, the parson is going to be beaten; and the worst of it is he can't afford to take his beating quietly. He feels that he has lost his hold on the public conscience and wants help from the outside. He is like a great Power, sick of isolation, looking out for alliances and always ready

for a deal with a *Dual* or a *Triplice*, or something of that sort. Once it was the Press; now it is the novelists—the once despised novelists. He feels that the people have somehow ceased to look to the pulpit for their criticism of life. They want more speculative freedom; above all, a better starting-point for new departures than the pulpit is able to afford. Their faith is now a progressive science like any other. Religion had its firmest hold when it was in that stage, and in the making on the anvils of the Councils. As soon as it got into its strait waistcoat of dogmas and decrees it was done for. Hence the Churches, whether for bane or blessing, can never leave the novelists alone. When they write a good book, or even only a goody one, they are acclaimed from the pulpits, not excepting those of the Upper Houses of St. Paul's or the Abbey; and they may even be asked to dinner while their vogue lasts.

An Ever Victorious Publisher: "I wish you literary gents would take us a little more into your reckoning. Then perhaps you wouldn't use hard words. The Reader-in-Chief is no Inquisitor: it is simply Mrs. Grundy. She has the last word after all the other readers, just as the twelve men in a box have it when the mere professionals have had their say. Her gift is that she is able to put us into possession of the soul of that average public which is the lord and master of us all—not for money only, but, in the last resort, for fame. And what is the result?"

Rude Interruption: "Marie Cor——!"

E. V. P.: "Whose synonym is Circulations—thank you for proving my case."

F. H.: "I thought we were talking about literature."

E. V. P.: "Yes, in its attribute of *General Interest*, the one thing that must be there, whatever other thing is not. Give them that, and it will carry all the academical graces you have the wit to put into it. Before all things, literature is just human interest. All its masters, not excluding the very highest, have had that; all the others, no matter what their pious faith in the catchwords of the schools, have lacked it. A colleague of my own trade—rather of the earth earthy, I admit—once achieved in my hearing an imperishable word. He was bragging of a latest venture that he thought would sweep the board. 'It's well written,

too, I'm told,' he said; 'but I don't think that will hurt it—in the circumstances.'"

A REVIEWER: "Do you want another case on the importance of being interesting? Here it is. The same Romantic movement with Borel for protagonist—Borel apparently with all the chances. The most perfect specimen of the Romantic ideal, as Gautier called him, even in person—the Antinous of his province, before he came to Paris to flutter it with the other moths in the flame. But alas! with all that, a perfect fanatic of art for art's sake, and, as he saw it, truth for truth's. 'I was republican from my childhood, but not republican in the sense in which the lynx would understand it; my republicanism is lycanthropy.' What a blister of a word! One has to go to the dictionary to help one out, and that without getting very much further:—'Lycanthropy, a species of insanity in which the patient imagines himself to be a wolf, and behaves as such'—or words to that effect. What a drop into the bathos of the uninteresting: what can the gentleman mean? How different from Hugo's way of putting it when he and the monarchy had no further use for one another, and he worked out his conversion to the popular side with a rolling eye ranging from earth to Heaven to make sure of a good house.

LUCIAN: "That was another silly thing to do—advertising his own failures—remaindering his own bad luck. If that's genius, give me——"

REVIEWER: "They gave him a Government post—Inspector of something or other. No use: he insisted on writing his reports in verse as the superior medium of expression. But the Government printers couldn't set up a stanza to save their lives; and he had to go."

VOICE: "But why gird at old Hugo?"

REVIEWER: "Gird at him! I praise. He knew how to put things: the others did not. He was a ruling man in poetry, and had to carry on his government."

ART CRITIC: "Did you ever see that picture of Vibert's —'The Missionary'—a wild apostle from some distant station of drought and torture, back in Rome to give an account of his stewardship, and at dinner with the Cardinals. Gorgeous, the hosts, in all the splendour of their robes and the luxury of their table service; and he a sort

of unwashed John the Baptist, ragged, unkempt, wasted to a skeleton under two fevers, only one of faith, the other of his first square meal for years. It is a case of the division of labour. His the spade-work of the propaganda; theirs the state of the Princes of the Church. None have anything to say against it: the guest, who evidently feels that he is having the time of his life, least of all."

F.H.: "A taste of the Libyan Desert might do both the Princes of the Church and the Princes of Literature no harm."

REVIEWER: "Why? Art for art's sake, if you like, but it must be tempered by worldly wisdom and worldly rewards. There is a curious streak of the wisdom of the serpent in most of the first-rates. They generally manage to be out of the way when the martyrdom is going round. Remember old Erasmus frankly owning he didn't like the taste of it. Most of the bill-toppers in this branch have taken care of the main chance. The fanatics who are all for the art get badly mauled. Baudelaire died a poverty-stricken wreck, on earnings for six and twenty years averaging less than eighteen pence a day.

F.H.: "Then there's your third Board of the Censorship, the Critics, each with a formula or, rather, all with one—generally a Paris fashion a year late. I think there may be something in their latest that art is the mere expression of a mood, a point of view without regard to any ulterior consequence in morals, whether for or against. It may conduce to morals, but virtue is not the aim; it may tell against them, but neither is vice. All is mere subject-matter—pessimism as an emotional rendering of the terror of life; optimism as its opposite, the joy of combat and the assurance of victory. Well, well! we must wait and see, I suppose."

VOICES IN THE VESTIBULE: "Anybody seen a hat? *My* umbrella, old chap, if you don't mind!"

# The Sin*

*An Allegory of Truth*

By Warrington Dawson

AUTHOR OF "THE SCAR," ETC.

PAUSE

What of a thought in the flash of an instant,
A word that is utter'd in impulse of haste,
And after, an act that alters a thousand—
A record mark'd down, that can ne'er be effac'd?

Ah, what of a foot that may slip on the brink
Of a cliff, and, past hope, plunge down the abyss,
A hero who proudly had scal'd to the height
In his triumph?—Woe, that a thought's end is this!

CHARACTERS.

The Artist.
The Friend.
The Decadent.
The Elder.
The Midway.
The Youth.
The Critic.

The Woman.
The Feminine.

The Innocent Cause.

Attendants

## Step I

He stood, a stranger in a strange land, watching the throngs that passed by; and their eyes were centred, as were his thoughts, upon the picture hanging close beside him. He looked upon them, and his gaze was constant; they looked upon what meant his utmost hope, and their gaze kindled with idle curiosity but to glide beyond and forget. Out of the many, some few tarried an instant and murmured a comment.

"A new hand—and a great one," remarked a man in the Midway of life.

"New to us, perhaps, but not to Art," corrected an Elder.

* *Copyright secured in the United States of America.*

"A beautiful woman, and a marvellous expression; she seems about to talk to us," said a Youth.

"The words which could fall from such lips are best unheard," protested a well-dressed Feminine.

"It is not the lips themselves that shock, but——"

The last speaker was a man of Decadent air, ascetic in feature and effeminate in dress; he broke off his sentence with a simper and a leer.

The Midway shrugged scornfully, the Elder grunted aggressively, the Youth flushed painfully and drew away the well-dressed Feminine as if to guard her against grave dangers.

"Hum—a wealth of technique, and more grasp than I have yet found among these exploiters of sensations," observed a Critic judiciously.

"Technique? Sensations? What means this jargon? It IS art!" cried out a tall, dark man who had approached; and whereas the others smirked or scowled and passed on, he halted before the picture and remained there plunged in admiring contemplation.

Presently he became aware of that other man who had been there from the first, and he addressed him:

"These people respond to real art in spite of false culture which blurs their ideas; but you and I understand," he said. "For the first time in many years our exhibition can boast of including the work of a master. It comes as a reward to me for having held out against the tendencies of our day, and having refused to consider art degenerate because many artists are so. I have claimed, against the best contemporaneous proof my adversaries could produce, that there is room in art not only for truth, which is subject to many interpretations, but for health, which is infinite in applications but one in conception. Could you, who appreciate as I do, tell me aught about this gifted artist? His signature is unknown to me."

The man addressed threw back his head as if shaking from his forehead the fair hair which formed a golden halo. His blue eyes shone with an inspired light, and his lips, red with the blood of sound young health, parted over teeth white as new ivory and polished as pure crystal.

"I am the Artist," he said simply.

The other had fallen back a step as the Artist smiled before speaking.

"Ah! I see now the reason for the only point which could be adversely criticised: you unwittingly reproduced in this portrait——"

"Portrait?" echoed the Artist.

"Oh, I recognised her at once," the other explained. "There has been some controversy; many people deny the likeness; you must have heard that Youth just now who spoke as if she had been a stranger to him. They are lacking in perspicacity; I had no intention of wasting your time or mine on them. My allusion, in what I started to say, was to the physical peculiarity which you unwittingly reproduced. It has led to misapprehensions: you may not have realised how strictly moral is this country. Fortunately, I see clearly. Although morbid suggestion is, indeed, there for those who demand nothing more from art, it is handled so frankly and healthily that no well-balanced mind ought to make a mistake. Allow me to remark, in the interest of your future, if you intend to remain among us, as I hope you will, that playing with fire is dangerous, even though one may believe onself proof against it."

The Artist's brow was swept by a half-angry, half-inquiring frown.

"It is I who don't understand you," he said.

The dark-haired man now smiled in his turn. His eyes shone brightly, too, and his lips were red with good blood; but his teeth showed, neglected and discoloured.

"Of course, of course," the dark man returned, not noticing him. "You are right, you could say nothing else; I must apologise for my indiscretion. You will allow me, however, to advise you not to challenge such risks again. This has succeeded, the whole town is talking of you. Accept the situation and profit by it, but beware of forcing a reaction! The most beautiful Woman in the land has heard of your work and is coming to see if it really resembles her. You had noticed her in the street, probably, and did this from memory?"

The Artist shook his head:

"I reached your city three days ago, with this portrait under my arm and the clothes upon my back as my sole earthly possessions."

"The portrait is no longer yours, I am ready to pay you any price within reason," said the dark man.

"One does not sell one's heart's ideal," said the Artist.

The throng parted, a whispered murmur became audible. The most beautiful Woman in the land entered the hall and approached the picture.

She drew near with a mien of cold reserve, as if prepared to be displeased and show no emotion. For an instant she seemed on the verge of vexation; then the radiant loveliness of her image seemed to efface the displeasure caused by one detail. She smiled, displaying a flash of white teeth such as the Artist had painted; and then, abashed, she passed on.

The Artist's universe had changed. He glanced once again at his picture, and it left him indifferent. What value had the Ideal when one had beheld the Real?

"I warn you that you will not easily find another purchaser," insisted the dark man. "I alone am above minding the—the peculiarity. It is doubtless what caused you to find affinities with her? And you can't deny, now that the Woman and her image have been face to face, that this was a portrait from memory?"

"I deny nothing," said the Artist.

"She would never dare take it; and if what you told me about your arrival in our town was true, you must wish to sell the picture. It is mine, then, is it not?" the dark man asked anxiously.

The Artist hesitated, but reflected that an Ideal might have value to help towards the Real.

"It is yours—for a price," he said.

"What price?"

"To be my Friend and make me meet the Woman."

## Step II

Steps were heard on the stair—there was a knock at the door. The leading citizens entered.

The Artist stood once more beside a portrait he had painted, and saw once more a throng pass by—the same throng which had passed, a week before, by the portrait of the Woman. But their glances were approving, now, and their words were honeyed, for he received them in a

well-appointed studio and they had been informed that he was accounted among the great.

"A most talented hand—a genius," remarked the man in the Midway of life.

"So closely akin to all which is best in art, that I feel as though I had been familiar with it always," said the Elder.

The Artist let them talk, let others come and talk. His eyes scarcely left the door until it opened and there entered the most beautiful Woman in the land.

She did not need the introduction by the Friend, she was unaware of the presence of others. Her hand seemed to find the Artist's instinctively, her radiant smile answered his.

The Friend led the throng away to admire an ancient tapestry; the Woman and the Artist remained alone.

"I should be angry with you," she said. "You took a liberty in painting me and exhibiting the picture without my permission. I came last week, in sharp discontent to see it; but before it I was disarmed. Only true talent can paint so well from memory, after a fleeting glance in the street—for so I am informed it was."

"Let them spread the legend!" said the Artist earnestly. "Let fools talk, so that they may not perceive! In a distant country I painted my ideal of woman, and was impelled to bring that picture here, to stake my fortunes on the venture, though for no reason I could analyse."

"It was the portrait of another, then?" she asked with a spark of jealous anger.

"It was the portrait which the moonbeams traced whenever I watched them play upon the water; it was the soft music which the winds whispered among the forest leaves at night; it was the love my heart craved for when none worth loving was near me! My artist visions of what beauty might be, and what my eyes of clay had never yet beheld, were the inspiration for that image as I painted it. Only when we met before it did I know why I had been prompted to create, why I had been prompted to come. My mind and my heart had found you while hundreds of leagues still held us apart in the flesh."

Her breath came quickly; she gazed, fascinated, into his eyes.

"You are bold, stranger that you are, to speak so," she murmured.

"I am not bold, I am true," he answered.

The well-dressed Feminine drew stealthily near.

"Talking of art?" she asked.

"He was telling me," said the Woman, "how he happened to see me and sketch me in the street."

## Step III

The Woman's eyes as she looked at him had told the Artist clearly that she cared, that she might be won.

Succeeding days brought him the material advancement on which must depend the right to love. He was advised of a competition for the heroic fresco in the banqueting hall of the new Palace, and he sent in a sketch which, indiscretions informed him, was almost certain to receive the award.

He was dressing, one morning, when his servant entered and announced the Friend.

"My dear fellow, you must excuse me, but we shall have to hurry," cried the Friend, bursting upon him. "What, not dressed? Well, be quick about it! The Board of Legislators are now in session, to pass upon the sketches for their fresco; they have practically decided to take yours, but there is a slight reserve upon some point which you are desired to clear up. You have but to say the right word, now, and your career here is assured!"

"Sit down and tell me about it," said the Artist, offering a chair to his visitor.

The Friend began:

"Here's the situation in a nutshell. The Chairman of the Board has already given you his support—you will remember him, he is the Elder who so admired your portraits. Among the Members, all openly approve except three or four, and only one has been inclined to hostility. That one is the man in the Midway of life. With tact and management you can win him over. For instance, you might flatter him about his art knowledge."

"But he is an ignoramus!" protested the Artist.

"Of course he is; that's why it's his weak point, and that's where you must flatter. In each age there's some

general key to human ambitions; once it was power, again it was celebrity, to-day it is wealth. But in all ages alike the key to human character is the same: vanity."

"Do self-respecting artists stoop to such means in your country?" the question was flashed.

"They do like everybody else," the Friend answered, undisturbed. "And they must do it if they desire a chance to exercise their talents in doing their best work. It's perhaps gratifying to have the inner consciousness that one is gifted, and to have a few friends acting as chorus to it; but one is more useful to the world when those gifts are exploited."

The Artist took the remark in good part.

"You are right," he said, "as to the principle, if not as to the method. I must be clever enough to win his sympathy by harmless flattery, though I will not trifle with artistic questions."

"He would probably respect you only the more for that reserve, the Friend rejoined. "He feels strongly about the lack of principle in modern art. It is because he fancied there was a morbid trait, suggestive of the Decadents, in your portrait of the most beautiful Woman, that he raised a slight objection about the fresco."

The Artist wheeled suddenly, as if to make a vexed retort. He held a tooth-brush in one hand and a glass of water in the other. But the words he had intended to speak never reached his lips.

The Friend was staring at him wide-eyed, with falling jaw. It was the face, the expression, the attitude of a man beholding some vision grisly beyond human ken or endurance. The Artist's first thought was that a spirit must have risen from the grave. He had not accepted such a thing as possible before, in his calm philosophic moments, but he believed it now. He glanced nervously behind him. Looking towards his Friend once more, he was astounded to realise that the horror inexpressible was focussed upon himself.

Then he understood, in the midst of a cold fear which gripped his heart. That glass of water contained poison. Merciful powers, what an escape! He dashed the glass to the floor, its contents traced sinister stains upon the carpet, its shattered pieces sparkled mockingly in the light.

He recovered his breath and strode forward:

"A great danger—you saved me——"

His movement, or the sound of breaking glass, had restored the other to life. But it was with an air of terror only the more ghastly because it was animated that the Friend sprang away as from a dangerous beast.

"You!" the Friend gasped in agony. "*You*! You!"

"I fail to understand——" began the Artist.

The Friend's shrill laughter rang out.

"Ah, yes! That was what you said before, there near the portrait of the most beautiful Woman, that ill-starred day when I first met you! And I did not know—I *would* not know! Why did I not heed suspicion when it pierced me?"

The Artist, in his turn, grew alarmed:

"You are mad!"

"I *was*, to believe in you!—ah-a-a-a-a-ah!"

The Friend had made a gesture which the Artist had tried to check, fearing for his life with this madman. Unwittingly, the Artist had touched the other's cheek with the brush he still held. But no sooner had the wild cry rung out, than the Friend planted under the Artist's chin a swift, powerful blow which stretched him full length upon the floor.

The shock stunned the Artist. Through eyes that swam he saw his Friend seize a chair and swing it menacingly—the light of violence, yes, of murder, shone in those eyes. The Artist thought of saving himself—but thought of saving, too, the Friend who had understood him, had succoured him, had opened to him the doors of love and of work. With brain still reeling, he recovered his self-control. Gathering his muscles together by a mighty effort of will, he sprang suddenly forward, seized his adversary's knees, and threw his man. With the weight of his own body he pinned down the prostrate form; then, wrenching a sheet from the bed, he bound the man's arms, caught the other sheet and bound the legs. At last he rose and surveyed his work.

The prisoner spoke:

"I failed to kill you—kill me, then! I will not survive this infamy. By forcing me to suicide, you commit murder as much as if you dealt the blow. Kill me then, and at

once, if the sense of mercy has survived in you the sense of decency!"

The Artist stared, unable to answer in his intensity of surprise. There was no more madness in his Friend's voice than in the look. Whatever the horrible illusion, it still subsisted, and in the brain of a perfectly sane man.

## Step IV

"Do you hear—can you understand me now?" the Friend broke in silence.

"Do *I* hear and understand?" echoed the Artist in bewilderment.

"Have you recovered from your momentary madness?"

"It is not possible——"

"I prefer to believe it so, out of charity and because of our former friendship—and perhaps for my own sake, too. Since you seem sane at present, unbind me and let me go."

The Artist hesitated:

"Those words of suicide——"

"I can live by considering you mad," said the Friend.

The Artist unbound him, but watched him closely as he rose from the floor:

"Leaving *my* madness out of the question, perhaps you might explain yours. Why this unprovoked attack upon me?"

"Before asking for explanations, you might have the decency to lay aside your implement of shame," said the Friend as he pointed an accusing finger.

The Artist had just taken up his tooth-brush, which he had dropped in the struggle. It was to this that the finger pointed.

An illumination came to him. It was true that all the people in this strange land had bad teeth. Alone, the most beautiful Woman had notions of the hygiene of the mouth.

The Friend had not seen a tooth-brush before, did not know its simple and beneficent application!

"You mean, then, my——"

The Artist had begun with a tolerant smile. He did not finish, for the Friend cut him short with an indignant protest hurled from purple lips set in flaming cheeks:

"Don't dare to speak the word which must never be

uttered! If you can defy morality in the country from which you come, our customs and our laws are different. Hard labour for twenty years, and social ostracism for ever, are our punishments for the sin you have committed in my presence."

"The sin of brushing my teeth!" cried out the astounded Artist.

"Hush! You may still escape from here without an open scandal in which I, as your friend, should be dragged down and dishonoured."

"I have not the faintest intention of escaping, or of renouncing a habit which is healthful and reasonable," said the Artist.

The Friend eyed him with surprise, then with suspicion, and at last with a ray of partly-restored confidence.

"Is it—is it possible that in your country *this is considered no sin*?" he asked.

The Artist burst into a merry laugh:

"My dear fellow—you are surely joking! It has been a joke all along, but so well played that I was completely taken in! Of course we br——"

"Stop! Be decent in your *words* at least, if we are to talk! If that term escapes you again, I shall be compelled to leave you to your fate. But I am disposed to help you if you will listen. At all events, I feel justified in continuing to know you, provided you attain a higher comprehension of life and of morals than your early education afforded. First, answer me this question: *In your country, is this considered no sin*?"

"I pledge you my word of honour that, far from being considered a sin, it is recognised as a merit, which the intelligent always try to teach to the ignorant. Why, it is now being included as an essential of education for children in the schools."

"For children in the schools," groaned the Friend. "I know now why you left such a country and sought our enlightened land. It is evident that your instincts are still sound in spite of your habits. I am confident that your better nature will yet triumph."

"My better nature!" cried out the Artist impatiently. "Why, you and I have often talked of healthiness, and cleanliness in life as in art! Don't you clean your finger-

nails, for instance—and perhaps your toe-nails sometimes?"

"This flippancy is most unseemly in a matter of sacred principle," returned the Friend severely. "You may count upon me not only for your sake, but for my own. Reflect that I even introduced you to the most beautiful Woman of the land. In disowning you, she would disown me also."

"Her teeth are whiter than mine," said the Artist defiantly.

"That is a physical peculiarity which subsists without any violation of the accepted laws of nature," replied the Friend. "Nature gave teeth to men as to all animals, and they were meant to come in a certain way and to go in another equally certain way. Only decadents would sink to the use even of mouth-washes: to go beyond this means absolute and irremediable degeneracy."

"You have no dentists, then? And what do you do when you are toothless?"

"We live on vegetables, custards, broths. It is folly to ignore the indications of nature."

"From that I might be led to believe that you never have toothache, that your teeth drop like berries from a bush when they are ripe. Do you mean this?" asked the Artist.

"Alas! our mode of life sometimes hastens Nature's designs," sighed the Friend. "So we must more than ever incline ourselves to Nature's law."

"And put up with toothache?"

"No, no! We possess the secret of a drug, one drop of which put on cotton in a cavity causes the tooth to fall of itself, not in violation of the law, but merely in anticipation of it. Only decadents retard these laws, only degenerates counteract them, and it would take a post-degenerate of a dangerous type to attempt actual violation of them."

"You forget one point," said the Artist. "If nature gave to animals stronger teeth than to men—and it is a fact—it may well have been because she considered men intelligent enough to do something for themselves."

"Don't quibble!" exclaimed the Friend. "You outrage my sentiments while retarding your own development. But I have faith in your intelligence and in your moral

fibre. But come, the Board of Legislators await us. I shall remain silent before the world about the sad scene I so unexpectedly witnessed. I believe in your salvation, I know I can count upon you to struggle. But I have one urgent demand to make: if there be another fall, let it be in secret, where none may behold and misjudge!"

## Step V

The two had reached the street door, when the Friend stopped and paled. He whispered to the Artist:

"You left it on the washing-stand. Is that your custom?"

"No," answered the Artist.

"You have kept it concealed until now?"

"Yes, but because——"

"Quick—before a servant enters the room! Run!" ordered the Friend with such intensity that the Artist lost no time, but hurried upstairs and was down again three minutes later.

"If the servants had known, there would have been nothing left for us to do," said the Friend, his calm restored. He resumed: "The revelation that you have been concealing it is an admission that you were aware of the sin, whatever you may argue to the contrary."

"Not at all," the Artist returned. "I take no risks with unknown servants, because they sometimes borrow their masters' tooth-br—— er—well, you understand. Since this is inexpressibly disgusting, I lock mine up when I travel."

"'Inexpressibly disgusting!'" the Friend repeated the words. "Yes, you have the moral sense in instinctive form which may later develop into full consciousness. Where have you locked it up now?"

"Locked up my moral sense?" asked the Artist.

"No, no! By *it* I mean the object which must not be mentioned, the cause of all the harm," said the Friend solemnly. "Pray remember this in our future talks. Or if you choose, to avoid ambiguity we can call it 'The Cause.'"

"A very innocent cause," the Artist could not help observing.

The Friend frowned:

"This quibbling of which you are so fond merely retards the period of your enlightenment. But you have not answered a question to which I attach the utmost importance. Where have you locked up 'The Cause'?"

"When I arrived in your town, it was in my pocket, since I had no other place to put it——" the Artist began, when the Friend interrupted him as had occurred so often before.

"You told me that you had no possessions save the picture under your arm and the clothes upon your back. Don't you know that such falsehood is a sign of hidden vice?"

"Really, you are driving me too far!" burst out the Artist.

"Please answer my question," said the Friend with seraphic patience.

The Artist threw up his hands in despair, waited a moment, and spoke once more:

"Among the things I bought——"

"You didn't buy another Cause *with my money*?" cried out the Friend.

"I bought a box in which to keep it safe from the indiscretions of servants. But it is not there. To save time, since you were waiting for me, I slipped it into my pocket, where it now is."

He tapped his right side, near the Friend, as he spoke. Whereupon the Friend started nervously and passed round to the left side, and spoke no more until they reached the Board-room of the Legislators.

The Elder, who was Chairman, addressed the Artist:

"From three hundred and fifty-nine and a half sketches submitted to us——"

"And a *half*?" the Artist echoed in wonderment.

"Yes, one was by an impressionist," the Elder explained. "We have set yours aside as the best. I should not conceal from you that certain members of the Board protested against the choice of a stranger. But by a large majority we decided to consider Art alone. The only other sketches which might have passed were by decadents. We could not do our country the harm of selecting one from their ranks. Therefore it is that from the three hundred and fifty-nine and a half candidates——"

"I think in this case you might say three hundred and sixty, Mr. Chairman," said the Critic. "Though one candidate sent only half a sketch, he may be a whole man."

"We shall give him the benefit of the doubt," rejoined the Elder urbanely, and continued: "Your first exhibited portrait, while great art, contained a suggestion which has been misinterpreted in some quarters. Your second work, the portrait of our esteemed friend here, showed your real sense for morals and healthiness in art, and for a dignity worthy of our country and its traditions. Let this guide you in the heroic fresco of 'Moses Receiving the Tables of the Law' for the banqueting hall of our new Palace."

"If you will allow me to put in a word here, Mr. Chairman," said the Midway, "I regretted particularly to note upon one face of this Artist's sketch a smile which was not as it should be. He would have to pledge himself to this consideration, that he would change on the fresco any face of which we disapproved on moral grounds."

"No self-respecting painter would accept such conditions," said the Artist. "But for a fresco it would be impossible, since the medium used allows no retouching."

"The medium *we* use will allow it," the Midway retorted triumphantly. "Our frescoes are painted in oils on big canvases which are fixed to the walls."

"Then you might call them by their right names—paintings or mural decorations," said the Artist.

The Midway flushed angrily:

"Our safest method, since this gentleman seems so disposed to argue, would be to ask for acts rather than words. I suggest that we require of him to give us now, before the commission is definitely awarded to him, a sketch of that face with a more seemly expression."

"Nothing could be easier," said the Artist.

He had reflected that out of the multitude at least one man must have been sceptical, and he had put a foolish sneer on the mouth of a venerable Child of Israel. He now determined to caricature the Midway who was making such unnecessary trouble, and transform the sneer of doubt into a snarl of jealousy.

"Nothing could be easier," said the Artist, "I shall give you a new head in a few seconds."

He drew out his pocket-book to get pencil and paper. As he did so, the tooth-brush fell to the floor.

If a hundred masked bandits, each carrying six-chambered revolvers in both hands, had burst in and given the Legislators three minutes to say their prayers before dying, the consternation of the worthy gentlemen could not have been more agonised.

In the hush before the hurricane, the Friend's clear, firm tones rang out:

"Gentlemen, I protest against tests for this man, who has just given you here, though unwittingly, the best possible proof of his worth. He has saved from the last step into degeneracy a young decadent in whose possession he found this shameful article. He confiscated it in order to destroy it privately, so none could suspect and reproach the poor soul narrowly saved from moral death. I ask you, Mr. Chairman, to pass a vote of confidence in the Artist, awarding him the commission without further question."

A cheer greeted the words, and the motion was carried unanimously.

## Step VI

The most beautiful Woman rested listlessly against the back of her armchair. She wore a flowing robe of pink gossamer with roses embroidered upon its edges, opening over a dress of blue silk heavy with gold; a wreath of rosebuds and leaves crowned her softly-coiled chestnut locks. The most brilliant society in the land pressed round her, and plied her with graceful words and subtle flatteries.

"My lady dreams to-day," said the Youth gallantly. "She dreams, finding in the realities of life nothing worthy of her."

"It is the same thought which drives us into art," commented the Decadent with an insinuating leer.

"With some artists it may be dreams, but with others it's nightmare," snorted the Critic.

"Don't be uncharitable to the absent," smirked the Decadent.

"I'm not," said the Critic.

"Then spare yourself," came the reply.

"Don't fear I shall ever spare you," the Critic snapped.

"It's the only thing in art I *should* fear," said the Decadent, and stood, grinning and caressing his fore-lock, as the Critic turned scornfully away. Then he addressed the Woman: "So my lady dreams of art—and perhaps of artists?"

Her fine eyes rested a moment upon his pale ones.

"My dreams have not wandered far," she said. "You may guess from that if I found an artist to fill them."

"It's hardly for me to say," he simpered.

"Then who can judge for you? Perhaps we are as uncertain about you as you are about yourself!" she smiled for an instant at his confusion, then grew serious and plunged once more into thought.

The guests went, one by one. The silvery chime of a clock struck seven. Silence fell upon her solitude. Then the door opened, and she saw the tall, handsome figure of the Artist.

He came forward with firm, swift step. The narrow conventions of society fell away from him. He threw himself impulsively upon one knee at her feet, and took tenderly a hand, which she did not withdraw.

"I had believed myself happy in my art, but I taste my first happiness near you," he whispered.

She leaned rapturously towards him, but drew back in a wave of sadness.

"I fear me that happiness is short-lived," she said in low, rippling tones. From being distant, she became cold, as she added: "Reports which surprised me greatly have reached my ears."

"What rumour matters since you know that for me the universe holds but you."

"It holds also my portrait, which you sold."

"I sold a fiction when truth came into my life; I put my poor rush-light out when the moon rose and bathed the world in radiance."

"But you sold it for a price—a great price, I am told."

"Yes, for a far greater price than those idle chatterers can suspect. I gave it to my Friend in exchange for the privilege of meeting the most beautiful of all women!"

She caught her breath—she leaned towards him once more. His arms enfolded her, and their lips met.

## Step VII

The news of the approaching marriage was announced at a reception given by the most beautiful Woman. Looks of jealousy were not lacking, nor pointed words beneath the smiles of her friends. It was galling to think that this strange Artist should carry off the prize her own countrymen had sought in vain. Why, it was said that the Elder himself had cherished absurd aspirations; and the same was known of the Decadent, who had declared himself by means of an insinuation before six witnesses, the latter perfectly agreeing as to the words, though not on their meaning. No wonder resentment brooded among them—but no wonder the Artist was indifferent to whatever they might say or think. He watched her surrounded by her old friends, once her courtiers and still her admirers. With an exquisite coquetry, she wore to-night that same dress which she had had on when she became his, the pink gossamer over blue silk, and the wreath crowning her locks. Her smile greeted their ready words, her repartee kept them on their mettle. And they stood and snarled with their ugly darkened teeth, which to them meant health and loveliness, while she answered with dazzling flashes which they considered a freak of nature. The philosophy of it, so far as the Artist could glean from chance remarks, was that children had sound teeth, which followed a certain evolution; that some teeth might be abnormally constituted so as to last longer than others; but that the reproach of Decadence lay only in the effort to retard decay.

But surely, the most beautiful Woman must clean her teeth in secret—as he had so often done? The thought fascinated him. She, with her superior intellect, must understand otherwise than these lunatics. Unable to renounce one of her chief claims to loveliness, unable to fight alone against an entire nation, she had to resort to subterfuge. This was the consequence of social prejudice, of social tyranny—such a Woman reduced to deceit and hypocrisy in order to remain true and healthy and beautiful!

If she could do it, however, then this sin which had begun to weigh upon him could not be so grave. He put himself to a test—he observed the smiles of these people,

and was not hypnotised as before. He could now look the whole world in the eye—yes, and in the mouth, too!

They had all laughed heartily, as he ended his meditation; he noticed with disquiet that the Decadent was the centre of the mirth, and that the Woman was vexed.

The Decadent approached him with soft, swinging tread, and, linking an arm in his, led him off towards a table in the dining-room, where wines were served. The Artist was conscious of the odour of mouth-wash which hovered about the Decadent.

"I want to drink to your luck," said the Decadent. "You managed this cleverly."

The Artist released his arm:

"I don't think I asked for your opinion."

"If you had, I wouldn't have expressed it—I always go by contraries," said the Decadent cheerfully. "I saw through this because it's what I tried to do—oh, I'm not jealous! You're free to keep her."

"And you are free to leave this house!" ordered the Artist furiously.

"I only take such liberties as I'm *not* allowed," simpered the Decadent.

"Enough of this! Go!" thundered the Artist.

"Oh, so you mean it? Well, I warn you, my good man, that I've seen through you, and you had better not get me angry, because I might make them see as I do." The Decadent dandled himself from one foot to the other. "Pretty story, that, about a—well, *I* have no prejudices, but there might be somebody listening, and even a broad-minded person like myself must draw the line somewhere. So a pretty story, I say, about *it* that you tore from a Decadent threatened with degeneracy! Why, if those poor fools had stopped for one single instant to think, they would have known that nobody, not the Elder, not the whole Board of Legislators, would *dare* interfere with us. We Decadents are the most powerful people in the land. Any person condemned by *us* on a charge of immorality sinks beneath the notice of self-respecting people. They think we're bad enough, but worse deserves flaying alive! I guessed the truth as soon as ever I laid eyes on you, and I knew it when I heard what had happened before the Board. It wouldn't take many hints from me to make them

understand. They're jealous of your success in love and in art, don't forget that.

"No, I am not going away because you told me I might, and I'd bet a pair of *its* that you don't interfere with me again!"

He swaggered back to the group.

The Artist remained alone, agitated and irresolute.

## Step VIII

The painting of Moses receiving the Tables of the Law was nearly finished.

The Artist had represented Moses near the foot of Mount Sinai. In the background the mountain loomed, its tones of blue and grey suggestive of eternal peace, but its rugged lines indicating the unapproachable. To the right, looking down with celestial smile from a cloud, was an angel face—the face of the most beautiful Woman in the land.

He was nervous, irritable; the temptation to give up, to go elsewhere, to do anything save that which he felt bound to do, proved irresistible. Why try to work since he could not?

"You can lead an artist to canvas, but you cannot make him paint," he muttered.

It was a question of mood, and one could not force moods.

Springing from his chair, he went to the door, which he had left ajar because of the noontide heat. He slammed it violently, and with trembling fingers of nervous haste, he drew the bolt. He failed to notice that the door was not quite shut, and that the bolt missed the hasp.

He took his tooth-brush from the pocket where he always carried it now, and set zealously to work. The sound of a stealthy step, the rustle of a silken skirt, made him turn with a start.

The well-dressed Feminine was in the studio.

He flushed—tried to conceal the tooth-brush, as if he had indeed been caught in a dishonourable action. His second nature had spoken before he had had time to think. It was too late, she had observed not only the deed, but the consciousness of guilt.

Her rich red lips curled contemptuously over her darkened teeth, and she eyed him with a scorn which made him cower as before a recognised superior.

"And I sat for my portrait to such a creature as you," she said.

"What harm can you pretend——" he began.

She cut him off:

"Ah, bah! Keep morality talk for others! But that you should expose yourself publicly through an open door!"

"Open door—!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, I closed it—bolted it, and properly too, from the *inside*," she rejoined. "I'm glad to know you believed you had shut it. What shocked me was the idea of your throwing all decency to the winds."

A hope entered the Artist's breast:

"You are not shocked? Then perhaps you, too——"

She shook her head:

"No; I'm not a degenerate. But I acknowledge I love them. There was an air about you which gave me the impression you were a decadent; that is why I came to you for my portrait; and often have I said to myself, 'I like him now, but if he were only a degenerate I should adore him.'"

He had thrown himself upon a divan, his elbows upon his knees, his hands up-raised and clasping his forehead. Suddenly he felt gentle fingers in his hair, and he heard the words repeated softly:

"If he were only a degenerate I should adore him!"

"But since I am no degenerate?" he asked, without looking.

He felt her arms entwined around his neck, he felt her warm breath upon his ear, he felt the rapid beats of her heart, as she whispered:

"Why this dupery with me? I know—I understand—I rejoice! Must I make a confession? I have been disillusioned! I loved a Youth whom I have learned to loathe—because he resisted the decadence which was his by right! A happy fate sent me to you to-day, noble artist and glorious man, that I might know and understand!"

He looked up, thrilled at the sound of her voice, at the

touch of her hand, at the blaze of her eye. He was drawn as positive pole to negative, without wishing, without reasoning, simply because a higher force called, simply because he was a puppet, the sport of nature. His arms sought her neck.

At that moment, from his canvas the face of the most beautiful Woman, as an angel in heaven, smiled down upon him.

He leaped up, and pushed away the Feminine.

She bit her lips with rage—and the red blood flowed, beneath that tooth which had been broken. The blood showed red in her blackened mouth, as he had once wondered if it might.

"You hound, you *beast*!" she screamed. "You dare——"

She stopped, suffocated. Then she added, when it became evident that he would not speak:

"It is madness, momentary madness. You would not dare."

"Here—leave me!" he clamoured fiercely. "I don't know by what right you came, but it's by mine you shall go!"

She grasped his hand in a last appeal; he pushed her roughly away. She touched the tooth-brush which he had tossed on the table. She drew back and struck him full on the cheek with her open palm.

"The whole town shall hear of this outrage!" she screamed.

"They shall hear of your behaviour!" he retorted.

"What I shall have to say of your vices will leave you never a chance to speak again!" were her words as she unbolted the door and fled.

He hurried out to ask advice of his Friend, but learned the latter was out. He then bethought him that the most beautiful Woman might be importuned, and he went to her house.

"My lady is not receiving," said a servant.

"If you tell her I am here——"

"I have my orders," answered the servant, slamming the door in the Artist's face.

## Step IX

The Artist roamed the streets for the rest of that day, he wandered out into the open country at night; at dawn he sought his rooms, not for the sake of resting, but to hide himself from the world. Once alone, and locked in, he threw himself on the bed, and fell into a fitful, feverish sleep.

He awoke with a dazed sense of misery, fully conscious only of a loud and repeated knocking at the door. He got up and opened. The leading citizens of the town were grouped without.

"We must talk with you at once," said the Elder.

"My picture is not finished—I will not show it yet," the Artist answered.

"We shall talk of that presently; a graver matter must come first," said the Elder. "But we refuse to enter there."

He pointed to the bedroom, and the Artist understood their visit.

*They knew.*

He showed them to his sitting-room, which adjoined the studio.

"We have come, sir, upon a most delicate mission," the Elder addressed him formally. "It is not for us to dictate morality to other countries, but you cannot deny us the right to live as we choose and to expect that strangers conform themselves to our laws—— I must ask you not to interrupt me," he said quickly, as the Artist seemed about to speak. "You shall have the opportunity to defend yourself when I have finished.

"You came among us to exhibit a portrait with decadent suggestiveness in it. You yourself furthermore had a physical peculiarity, which we have learned to recognise as a dangerous indication. Judging you by your healthy appearance, however, and accepting the word of your highly esteemed Friend, we harboured no suspicion against you. But facts have been revealed to us which leave no room for doubts."

The Artist, haggard, weary, half-famished after his day and night of despair and of wandering, seemed again about to speak; again the Elder would have checked him, but the outburst came:

"Be plain with me! What do you want?"

"Our sense of decency——"

"If your standards are not like mine——" the Artist interrupted, to be interrupted in turn:

"Whatever the vileness of your thoughts, you shall respect our customs outwardly, or suffer the penalties of the law! Incidents have occurred here, in your house, which would have put you behind prison bars if your servants had filed a complaint instead of preferring to shield their own good fame with silence. But now that you have pushed audacity to the extent of attempted corruption of a most respected fellow-citizeness——"

"You don't pretend *I* am accused of corrupting *her*?"

"It is to be expected of a nature such as yours that you should besmirch the fairest characters," returned the Elder contemptuously. "We are not men to be so deceived, or even to listen. If you persist in this attitude, we must withdraw."

"And then?" questioned the Artist.

"We can't imprison you unless a warrant is sworn out by one of your attempted victims," said the Elder. "But we can issue against you a writ of expulsion as a menace to public safety."

"What—*for brushing my teeth*?" screamed the Artist.

"We shall allow you to leave our country unmolested," said the Elder with a note of compassion in his voice.

"Allow me to leave!" burst out the Artist bitterly. "Do you suppose that is all I ask? I should abandon what is dearest to me." His thoughts were on the most beautiful Woman.

"Ah—your picture!" said the Elder. "If you provoke no further scandal before going, we shall consent to keep it."

"Don't forget it's paid for," interposed the Midway indiscreetly. "You said you had not quite finished. We shall give you two hours for those last touches, and shall then return to see if we approve."

The Elder nodded confirmation, and they all left the house.

The Artist forgot them—forgot his picture. His thoughts were for the most beautiful Woman. He must fight for her—win her! Let him recover his manliness, throw off these obsessions of mystery, of suggestion. . . .

A terrific resolve came to him.

He stepped down to the street, went to the square, stood by the fountain, waited until a score of people approached from different directions.

And then, in public, he brushed his teeth.

## Step X

A few minutes later he crouched in the shadow of a wall, hiding from the mob which had tried to lynch him. But he felt rehabilitated morally, he had affirmed his principles like an honest man.

The crowd had lost the scent, and rushed on. The chase was in full cry; he could hear the voices of men, women, and children, clamouring as their boots clattered on the stones. He was to be made an example of—children had witnessed the sin, children should behold the retribution!

Their very enthusiasm offered him his sole chance. The whole town had turned out, so he need but listen for the direction they took, and slip by circuitous routes. Applying these tactics with infinite precautions, he reached the house of the most beautiful Woman, rang, forced an entrance before the servant could stop him, and strode into her sitting-room. She was there.

She changed colour; her throbbing throat and temples told him that she loved him as much as ever, though she was striving to resist.

"Dearest," he said, "my dearest, but listen to me!"

She rested a frail, trembling hand upon a table, she looked towards him, but her eyes swam in tears and her lashes quickly veiled them.

"If you can clear yourself of these awful charges——" she murmured.

"Charges! What charges? That I——" He checked himself helplessly. How find words which would not be an outrage in her ears?

"You have but to tell me that they slandered you," she said. "Your word is more to me than all their evidence."

"I gave it once," he said with lowered eyes.

"Give it again now, and we shall fight out this battle side by side, my hand in yours!"

Impulsively, he folded her in his arms; she returned the pressure, and kissed him on the lips. For long, entrancing moments they remained thus, their cares forgotten, and lip ever seeking lip.

She spoke again, her head now sinking upon his breast:

"I should have known it was false! Oh, how wrong, how cruel I was, to refuse to see my dearest yesterday! But I needed time to *think*, love! A poor, weak woman—how could I know what course to choose?"

She was his! They would fight this out together, as she had said. She believed in him, and she was his! He kissed her again, and folded her closer.

And then came the last moral struggle of his life.

He told her the truth.

She, who had rested against him, shrank away. As he ceased speaking, she turned on him, wild-eyed but resolute:

"Go— Go— Unclean— I *hate* you!"

## Step XI

The Artist staggered into his studio. He had been identified by passers in the street, though he had not met the mob; efforts had been made to seize him, missiles had been hurled at him; his clothes were torn, blood streamed from a wound on the cheek, he limped from a blow on the knee.

Only temporary, this safety, but it was all he asked. He had a piece of work to finish—his last work.

He had just thrown down the paint-brushes, when the door opened without warning. The Friend came in, but did not approach; his hands were clasped behind his back, his hat remained upon his head.

"I come not from friendship, but out of justice," he said scathingly. "I begin thus, so you may understand clearly. I am responsible for detaining you in our land, and so I come, although I feel towards you as towards the dead, to warn you of grave danger.

"There is a warrant out against you for public outrage to morals. You still have time to escape——"

Steps resounded on the stair.

"You are lost!" groaned the Friend, covering his face with his hands.

The leading citizens came in. Before them was stretched the canvas for their new banqueting hall. A cry escaped them.

Moved by the passion of hate where the passion of art had failed him, the Artist had, with swift strokes, transformed the Giving of the Tables into Moses Breaking the Tables of the Law. They lay, in fragments, at his feet; his out-stretched hand denounced the Children of Israel, who mouthed and raved, black toothed, round their golden calf, whose teeth were white as finest porcelain. In the heavens, a baleful glow of red seemed to reflect the flames of hell, and tears flowing from the eyes of God's angel seemed to seal the hopelessness of salvation.

"This is more than we must bear!" cried out the Critic. "This insult to our State shall be destroyed!"

"No, keep it, to his eternal shame, that children may be brought to spit upon it!" jeered the man in the Midway of life. "Where are those portraits of his, that we may bring the whole together in a mausoleum of his works?"

"The portraits are mine, and mine they shall remain," said the Friend. "Whatever you may say of this man whom I once knew, and whatever I may think of him now, I keep those two specimens of great art to show posterity what the Artist was, at the time when he came among us!"

A murmur arose approving his courage. Only the Critic and the Midway protested.

"I have always made my reserves," said the Critic.

"I was opposed to giving him the order," said the Midway.

"Then that explains this," remarked the Youth, pointing to a diabolical old Israelite who snarled jealously at the golden calf with the porcelain teeth, as if aspiring to rival adoration because of his hideousness.

The Midway choked, took out his penknife and ran to the picture. With that tiny weapon, advancing upon the vast canvas, he seemed puerile, impotent. But there was a sound of tearing, of ripping; holding the blade firmly, he ran from left to right across the painting, and left it gaping open. He saw that in his haste he had missed by

several inches the caricature of himself at which he had aimed: he tried again.

The Artist had stood, a frozen wreck, looking on but heeding nothing. Cries rose from the street—the mob had learned that he was above. The citizens grew anxious:

"Where are the officers of the law? Why don't they do their duty? Let the prison doors close upon this man!"

The Decadent pushed forward, he put his hand on the Artist's arm and whispered into his ear:

"Come with us—we can save you—we are all-powerful! You know that none dares offend us. If this is so now that we have no leader, think of what it will be when you are our head! These fools will be there for us to make sport of them!"

The Artist, unable to speak, motioned the Decadent away.

"And you need not sacrifice your teeth, you must only renounce the Cause," the Decadent continued. "My teeth are almost as good as yours; I'll tell you about my wash. Oh, we can teach you the joys of being decadent without the unpleasantness of being degenerate!"

As the Artist still gave no sign, the Decadent spoke again:

"Think well! Twenty years behind prison bars if the officers take you, or death by lynching if the crowd catch you! Your sole hope is to accept my offer."

The Artist shot a despairing look over the group of citizens; he listened a moment to the threats and curses hurled from the street. There was no mercy but that at his side.

He turned to the Decadent, and nodded.

The Decadent raised his voice and addressed the citizens:

"Gentlemen, I demand that the warrant issued against this great artist be suspended. If we are patriotic, if we regard gratitude as a duty, we cannot reproach him for what has occurred. I hold his full confession. His search after the *sensations* which alone count in art led him into dangerous experiments. He acknowledges his error, and entrusts himself to us henceforth for guidance. I and my fellows answer for him that he will never commit the sin again. See—the Cause of evil—I take it from him, and

he does not object. I take it knowing that you would not touch it. But I am no coward like you! There—snapped in twain—and out of the window to the rubbish-heap where swine may come and lick it! Gentlemen, by your leave, we shall go about our business." He linked his arm more firmly into the Artist's, and led the way. The Artist, all resistance gone, followed—

Followed the lead of one who sought but zest in all matters of life, who had been glad to renounce his most sacred traditions and privileges; followed the lead of one who was, in truth, merely following in the footsteps which he himself had already unconsciously trodden and was now doomed to retrace of his own free, awful, and perverted will. To accomplish this, he turned his back upon all that was high and noble—for no better reason than that convention had not accepted as he saw, had not allowed as he craved, had not understood as he knew, had raved against sin where he saluted truth.

Out into the open ways he went with his companion in misery—into the darkness of weakened senses, of useless endeavour, of vain desire, which tempt undirected humanity to seek evil where it is not and to compromise with it there where it is.

# The Country of the Blind*

"TWENTY miles or so from Calais, a day's airship flight from Moscow, in mist and rain, or squall and dampness, there lies the prettiest little island in all Europe, cut off from intercourse with the Continental world because of the sturdy seas that surround it. The characteristics of this island and its people are distinctive; but perhaps the most peculiar of the native idiosyncrasies is that, though many of the greatest men of action and thought, of science, poetry, philosophy, and the creative idea have arisen from its shores, its inhabitants are noted for a form of blindness which, if it often leads to a remarkably clear and blue colour in the eye itself, betrays its weakness by a congenital, or, as some think, an insular non-sightedness, as if were there a little curtain drawn behind the retina, thus obfuscating or deflecting its vision. Many scientific names have been given to this peculiarity, and whether one accepts such designations as Conservatism, Puritanism, Insularism, damn-your-eye, cussedness, doggedness, myopia Britannica, or what not, as the right diagnosis, travellers generally prefer the story of one Nelson cocking the spy-glass to his blind eye when he did not wish to see a particular signal, as the more rational explanation of the disease which finds expression in a national inability to recognise the truth of anything that it is not held desirable to recognise, or even to see what all the time stands up and hits it bang in the face."

The notebook of the man who fell into this country—he had missed his way in the clouds hanging over the North of the Island, and striking against a local airship had boarded it and been taken to land—is not without interest, for he is reputed a wise man in his own country, and having long since freed himself from all trammels of dogma, theory, ethical ism or convention, his stray reflections seem worthy of chronicle.

* With profuse apologies to Mr. H. G. Wells.

He knew (his notebook narrative begins) at once that he was in the Country of the Blind, because the first and only thing the airman said to him after his rescue and subsequent descent to earth was the startling remark, "It's a fine morning, ain't it?" whereas it was drizzling at the time, and, flying across the grey slag peaks, quorns, rocks and walls, it was evidently all his saviour could do to sight a safe breaking-place and come to land. The next remark seemed to him even more typical:

Said the blind rescuer, in answer to his inquiry about telegraphing his whereabouts to his wife: "Lloyd George! Ha! ha! He's got the goods all right. Have a cigar!" the preposterous irrelevance of which struck the wise man from the clouds as a notable phenomenon. In his notebook he makes the following shorthand commentary:

"Man spoke once in a hundred miles' flight, and then to say it was fine when it was raining. Curious example of national blindness. The telegraph wires made him think of the Chancellor. Following this hint, I found it answered admirably, for, walking into a telegraph office an hour later and telling the girl I wanted 'to Lloyd George,' she smiled graciously and immediately said, 'Marconi'—who, it so happened, was the very man I wanted to see in connection with our new Governmental service. Obviously, one always has to say what one doesn't mean. For example, people don't understand you if you say 'conscription' for national service, 'passion' as applied to love, so that in the same way as it is rude to call a lie a lie, it is equally disconcerting to a man to say that he is a truth-teller. To be remembered, if you want to lie, tell the truth; nobody will believe you.

"On the use of the word 'bloody.' In this country it is purely emphatic, except in cases of poetic licence. See the pretty story of the child found wandering without parents. ''E's friends call him little bloody, your worship,' *i.e.*, little 'thing-a-mi-gig' or 'master independent'—not to be confounded with sanguinary, which is reserved for epic occasions, such as the destruction of the Mahdi and his Dervishes. 'Bloody'—probably derivative from the national symbol, 'Keep your pecker up,' or, 'your powder dry,' gunpowder playing a prominent part in the annals of these people; on the other hand, you may say 'damn,' if not

angry—the women say it quite prettily—but when thoroughly annoyed one says 'bother': it is more forcible."

Again we find the philosopher interested, and this time it is on the subject of Truth.

"Truth," he writes, "in this country means habit or desirability. A curious example: The Press are very indignant because a black man—said to be the champion pugilist—wanted to appear in some theatre. The reason adduced is that he is implicated in a by-law in one of the American States connected with the transference of a 'gay' woman (gay is the word in vogue for immoral, presumably because to be 'merry and bright' is the national fetich) from one State to another—which may or may not be a crime. I don't know. At any rate, some of these Islanders take a special interest in abetting the escape of Russian 'revolutionaries' (*i.e.*, men who are struggling for freedom, constitutional and individual). Anyhow, a terrible rumpus was made. The Press had 'leaders' on the matter, which became of national importance. To be noted, however, is the paradox that the same Press is full of telegraphic accounts of a white man, called Thaw, who is a murderer and has been adjudicated insane. I couldn't quite understand this, at first. They make a hero of a lunatic and a murderer, and damn a black man for helping an unfortunate woman to change her abode! Explanation—Crippen. These people idolise notoriety, reports of murders, crime, robbery, bloodshed, war, disaster, evil. It was explained to me thus by a gentleman I met in a public house (*i.e.*, a smelly place covered with sand, where handles squeeze out drinks). Had the nigger shot a sheriff, escaped, and then tried to go on the stage, the Islanders would have applauded, as they applaud Thaw, who, besides, is a millionaire. The pugilist has only done something. He is only first in the world in his trade. It is a higher moral achievement to have inherited a lot of money. People think more of a man, so do the women. The nigger, therefore, made a mistake in not killing a man first.

"Thaw, now, . . .

"Not at all. Wrong train of argument. They are 'whole-hoggers' these people, but quite devilishly clever. It is not really the question of a by-law at all. It is a question of colour. The nigger is a nigger—dash him,

damn him. Any rope is good enough to hang a nigger with. In addition to being the champion fighter, the black man is said to be the Falstaff of negroes. What boots it? Black is his crime, whereas Thaw's crime was only a sensation. If you shoot a fox you are a 'dirty cad.' If you shoot a man you may become a hero. After Drake—Crippen, so the man in the 'pub.' explained it to me. The public wants these heroes. Otherwise they would only have marmalade for breakfast. After all, the Romans took emetics with their meals. Again, a question of degree. At the same time, nobody in the country admits that the nigger is black. Here we have myopia Britannica succinctly illustrated."

"I would refer the literary-historian to my work on *The Aberrations of Civilisation*, vol. xvii., ch. iv., where they will find a pathological study of the moral and mental stability of a people who, proudly styling themselves champion 'Bible-bangers' of the world, yet reviled and pilloried 'Uncle Kruger' because of a difference of opinion on an economic question which led him to quote Holy Writ all the time. Students should carefully observe this manifestation of the disease, which is apt to give rise to a false political diagnosis.

"In my last lecture I dwelt on the woman's movement in this Island, pointing out how noble and splendid it was that the women there were striving for the perfection of femininity in contradistinction to the perfection of virility. I drew a picture of the world ruled by the Anglo-Saxon peoples, supreme because their women were such superb mothers, wives, lovers, helpers, and because the men *per contra* were such magnificent creators, fighters, thinkers, philosophers, and administrators—how, in short, any movement tending to refine and ennoble the one sex must affect retroactively the other, to the common advantage of both.

"On my return, must start course of lectures dealing with clinical aspects of movement. First stage: splendid processional marches of matrons, mothers, and virgins, through streets—Madonna-like expressions on faces. Historical example of feminine humility, love and service in the cause of humanity. Compare vestal virgins, also noble self-sacrificial attitude of these women, even ladies of quality, who exhibit themselves for the cause in various attitudes, poses, states of semi- and more or less complete

nudity—to advertise the great emancipating movement of the sex towards the goal of ideal purity and femininity. Compare also Nautch girls of India, Geishas of Japan—dwell especially on the spirit inspiring these women, their complete detachment from all worldly vanities, evidenced by their economies in dress on arms, shoulders, back, bosom, &c., and markedly so on the stage, where, no doubt, they are stirred to rival feats of martyrdom and self-immolation.

"Second stage: the battles in the streets against large and incomplete policemen. Storming of Parliament Yard under the frown of Cromwell. Hell for leather in Trafalgar Square. Revival of Elizabethan buccaneer spirit. The 'No-trousers Brigade,' led by the Generals Pankhursts. Discomfiture of the effete male generally. Reprisals. Heroic hunger-strikes. No vote, no food. The old stomach fable again. Belly 'on top,' as they say. Demoralisation of authority, and constabulary arm. The 'white slave' movement. Utter rout of man. Its origin—the colour question in the Rand mines, or 'Chinese Labour.' Its meaning—claim of women to love and to be loved without domestic cares and responsibilities, whether infantile, economic, or social. Result—the nigger boxer's collapse. Vindication of *solar plexus* ethics in polite life, Woman henceforward *mater dolorosa* of Empire and the stay of public affairs. Inner meaning of forcible-feeding martyrdom—to show mankind physiological inefficiency of bottle-food for infants. Triumph of motherhood. All babies in the future to be fed at the breast. Epigram—milk of human kindness sweeter than condensed. Continuity of race assured.

"Third stage—incidental phenomena.

"Physical (hardening-the-constitution) drill of young generation; heroic discarding of petticoats and all superfluous underwear and raiment generally. Exposure of human form divine on all occasions. League of immodesty and transparent dress—to shame the male authorities who defile statues in museums. Conspiracy with fashion merchants and newspapers to run up prices of feminine attire and cause them to be changed as often as possible with a view to impoverish their male janitors. Economic skirmishing in furs, aigrettes, jewellery. Frocks to be worn front

backwards to add to public confusion, and accentuate spirit of slavery existing. Rouge and cosmetics to be used freely, as the Indians put on their war-paint. General scheme of campaign—to return to Paradisial conditions in order to shame and humiliate man. No vote—no snake. All young girls to be brought up and trained as men, *i.e.*, to shoot, smoke, and be toughened with all kinds of athletics and games; thus the grizzly-bear wrestling performances in the ball-room, the burning of private houses, and the revival of coarse manners in imitation of the men. Hair to be dyed according to fashion. Motherhood not the supreme office of women. Revolt at sex bondage. Man to learn his place in the home. No hearthrugs. No crickets (*Cicadæ*, not the game of stumps and a ball). No mutton for the Army, no virginity, no chivalry, and no sonnets.

"Fourth stage: review of movement, and its immediate effects on the male. These self-evident. Entire male population absorbed in purblind pursuit of solid disc. Epidemic of golf, revival of cricket, tennis, punch-an-kick-ball direct results of woman's movement. Touching public subscription to London's Great Landowner's Fund for purposes of professional athleticism. All boys educated as scouts. Decline in book-learning generally. Abolition of controversy. National attack on the contemplative life. Outlines of general scheme. In order to make real men, men must be rejuvenated. The knicker-bocker craze—see golfers and the 'literary gent.' Censorship of stage and libraries. All plays and books dealing truthfully with real life to be put in Class B—*i.e.*, withheld from public gaze. Stage managerial directions—to display as many women in public as nakedly as possible, to stimulate the senses by all means admissible and contrivable, while studiously doctoring or cutting out any passages in any 'book' relating to sense or wisdom. Plays to be run on the Eton-collar standard only, the object being to promote merriment not thought, on the lines of the Public Schools' educational system. And the same with the libraries. Any book referring to a woman as a 'mistress,' to a kiss as a kiss, to love as love, to be kept in the suspect class. The test of all literature to be the standard of the parlour-table—what Tommy may read on his holidays. Shakespeare to be reserved for Sunday evenings. Most 'dirty' foreign works

to be boycotted. Poets to be accorded considerable licence because they never grow up. Otherwise all novels to be 'papped,' except those by women, who may write what they please. See, by the way, the Early Closing Hours Bill, to facilitate juvenile recreation; the Welsh Disestablishment Bill, to break down the knowledge of the Bible; the Home Rule Bill, to break up the Happy British Home; and the revolutionary land reform legislation with the object of returning to nature. As subsidiary measures, to be noted, the rise in the prices of man's indulgences—tobacco, beer, wines, spirits, bacon, the stagnation of wages, and the great demand for flexible and inflammable material such as oil and rubber (for purposes of muscular development and condition).

"In short, man and woman are at war, and there is something beautiful in this liberation of women from the chaos of civilisation. To me, the sight of these noble creatures exhibiting their bodies in ball-rooms and public places for educational and ethical purposes is one never to be forgotten. Their total absence of self-consciousness, their self-imposed sacrifice on the altar of progress and reform, mark these women out as the ideal mothers of the great race which is to be when the process of levelling up the men to woman's mental, moral, and physiological standard shall have restored the pristine equation and harmony between the two sexes. Such, indeed, was Eve, naked and unashamed, before the serpent tempted her. Oh, woman; alma mater of the universe!"

Here several leaves fail, but later we find the professor indulging in another train of thought:

"It is odd," he reasons, "to find these conquerors and merchants plunged into a kind of social warfare concerning the merits and demerits of sex. With us, we have long ago recognised Love as the supreme arbiter on all sex problems and disputes, as (of course) we have long since recognised the only decent union of the sexes to be the natural affinity of reciprocal affection. In the Country of the Blind this is not so. They think unhappily married people should continue to live together, no matter how repugnant such a union may be either to the woman or to the man, and the few who break away from this convention are victimised

in the public Press as felons and cut-throats. This is obviously largely a matter of sight. Henry VIII. now is a national hero, an M.P. who divorces is a rabbit—Crippen was a hero because he killed his wife; the plain man who divorces is a 'blackguard.' It must make marriage a highly dangerous experiment, as of Love it makes a winding-sheet. That, no doubt, is the reason why books on love and sex are virtually taboo. It is not easy to love. Few men are good lovers. But these peoples' marriage is more in the nature of an institution. It may not be broken; therefore love, as we understand it in our country, is irrelevant. Here again, I find colour blindness to be the cause, *vide* 'blackguard,' the phrase a 'white man,' dirty nigger, &c. It is not convenient to try and alter things. Then the wise men who sit in Parliament are nearly all happily-married men, people of impeccable social decorum and infallible righteousness, whose business it is to sit on other men's hats and when in doubt on their own. The social conditions of this country are, indeed, exceeding strange. Even at the races a man never knows what hat to wear. Hats seem very like lovers. A grand lady can wear any hat or have any amount of lovers; in short, hats and lovers are the badge of aristocracy. The others are citizens, the mob—they are fed with the spoons of snobbery.

"'In the Country of the Blind the One-eyed Man is King.'"

"By no means. Far more attention is paid to extrinsic than to intrinsic worth. They regard wealth as happiness, and all kinds of rewards are heaped upon the rich. I found no philosopher at Court. Lap-dogs are more cherished than genius. Sometimes a poet, an artist, a wandering creative spirit falls on the road, but the sparrows in the Great City are always fat and chirpy, and the ducks are fed regularly by the children. I was told the reason of this was because these animals say Quack! Quack! of a morning so nicely and simply. I can well believe it. Art is not so simple. The children can hardly be expected to understand that.

"I find human cruelty to be characteristic of this race, whereas animals are held sacred. I was introduced to a sailor the other day who had jumped overboard into a rough sea and saved a dog, and he told me in conversation quite

cheerfully he had had two illegitimate children, but did not for the life of him know where they were. A typical case. A child born out of wedlock cannot by law be legitimatised. At the same time, a man may not kill himself. Thus, my sailor friend was a hero for saving a dog. Curiously, too, the women use the word prostitute as a term of reproach. Most of these ladies keep dogs, cats, horses, marmosets, or some animal, but it never occurs to them to do anything to help vast numbers of their own sex who have fallen in the battle of life. Oblique sight, of course. Pathologically, a curious fact, and my students will be interested to hear about it.

"The wisest men I met are certainly the sailors: they are kinder than the others and know best about the weather, which is the ultimate test of the national intelligence. Government is entirely in the hands of the Daily Press, as the Press is in the hands of the advertisers, and the advertisers are in the hands of the women. Superficial observation might easily lead the enquirer astray on this point. The woman's movement is not really for the vote; it is to restore the equilibrium of sex and government. Thus, the anti-vivisection campaign, to prevent science from learning too much. For the women fully recognise the law of the fittest. In a country run entirely on women's dress and ornaments (through advertisers, Press, and so Parliament), it is essential to preserve the balance of power. Ships are called she, to remind men of their maritime fidelity. Thus, the Salic law is only a corruption of saline. All the able, sensible, and determined men they put in ships of some sort. The others they train, like their dogs, to sit up and 'trust.'

"That is why they hate individuality, originality, genius, creative talent generally—the dogs won't trust."

Here there is again a break in the professor's discursive narrative. Further on in the notebook I find this phrase, whatever it may mean:

"Two old maids went out for a tramp in the woods—the tramp died."

And underneath, underlined, the words:—

"Title for my lecture to the Metaphysical Society next year."

There is little else in the notebook, except this:—

"*Off-side*, *i.e.*, Tariff Reform."
"*Snicker-snee*, *i.e.*, Lloyd George."
"*Little Boy Blue*, *i.e.*, Mr. Balfour."
"*Metabolism*, *i.e.*, Party Politics."

And at the very end of the notebook, which was discovered in a suburban railway carriage, there are two quotations:—

"The rain, it raineth every day."—*Shakespeare*.

"We've got the men, we've got the ships, we've got the money too."

"Quite so; but have they got the women?"

# The Position of Women under the Hammurabi Code

By Florence G. Fidler

HAMMURABI was King of Babylonia somewhere about the year 2000 B.C. Experts differ as to the exact date, but to the non-expert mind this is of small importance compared with the fact that this enlightened monarch compiled a code of laws which is the earliest known in the history of the world. The Code was used in its entirety for fifteen hundred years or more, and survived many conquests and national upheavals, so that its influence on the earliest legal ideas of mankind must have been very great.

Very little is known about the administration of justice at that time, but probably the courts of law were situated within the precincts of the Temple, and it may be that the chief power rested with the priests. There is, however, evidence that the three offices of Judge, Elder, and Scribe were sometimes held by women. The judges constituted a distinct profession, and were men of high rank, not necessarily priests. The Lady Ishtarummu is the only woman judge known by name. The elders formed a permanent body of witnesses, and also included women; it is thought that age and a certain residential qualification were necessary for this office; the women would perhaps be widows who were householders. The scribes must have been very numerous and very important, as the Code decreed that only written agreements could be recognised. The so-called "contract tablets" exist in thousands, and provide the chief evidence we have of the conditions of life in Babylonia. Many of them are the handiwork of women, and out of a total of ninety names of scribes known, ten at least are those of women; in all probability the proportion is much higher.

All the affairs of life, from criminal cases to marriage settlements, were carried out in the courts under oath. Culprits and clients were brought directly before the judges without any go-between. In all cases of dispute the final decision rested with the King, and there was the Right of

Appeal to him; he is described as omnipotent and supreme, but it is evident that even he could do nothing without religious sanction. For the guidance of his judges, Hammurabi compiled (partly from already existing laws, partly by the use of fresh material) his celebrated Code, and engraved it on a stone obelisk.

This block of black diorite, as world-famous as the great Rosetta Stone itself, has been discovered during the present century in the course of excavations made at Susa, the site of the ancient city of the Persian kings, by the French Government. External evidence shows that it had been carried away from its original home in Babylonia as a trophy of war by the Elamites about 1100 B.C. At the present moment it forms one of the most precious possessions of the Louvre, that most wonderful collection of precious possessions, and can be found in the Salle de Susiane, the second section on the ground floor of the Galleries Asiatiques. Here it stands in the middle of the room, surrounded by strong railings, and carefully guarded by a special attendant, lest it should share the fate of poor Mona Lisa. It is a smooth pillar of irregular rounded shape, and from a distance has something the appearance of a mummy case standing upright. Roughly it measures seven feet in height, with a circumference of from five to six feet. At the top, on the front, a piece is sliced off to make room for a relief representing Hammurabi standing in the presence of Shamash, the Sun-god. The rest of the surface is covered with cuneiform script in rows of short columns, wonderfully clear and sharply cut. The Stele was discovered broken in three pieces, but these have joined so successfully that little or nothing of the writing has been lost thereby. Much more serious is the wilful damage done by the Elamite conqueror, who has scraped out the last five rows of columns on the front with the unfulfilled intention, it is thought, of inscribing a record of the capture of the monument. Thus about thirty-five ordinances are missing, but three of these exist on the remains of contemporary copies of the Code owned by the British Museum, which has also an excellent caste of the Stele itself.

In turning to the text* of this ancient Code of Laws

* The various translations from the cuneiform text differ considerably in matters of detail, and it is sometimes extremely difficult, while comparing them, to arrive at any exact conclusion.

and searching for its bearings on women, it is astonishing to find how humane and how extremely sensible are most of the provisions which bear on home life. It goes without saying that concubinage and slavery are crude matters of course; and unmarried daughters are evidently the absolute property of their father, to be hired out for service, given as wife or concubine, pledged for debt, sold as slaves, or dedicated to the Temple. The only right a girl had was to become a nun, in order to avoid an uncongenial marriage. But it is the laws relating to the married woman and the mother which are so astonishing. The Code assures to the wife an exact position of comparative freedom, and there are repeated examples of the respect paid to the dignity of motherhood; again and again, too, we find that the woman's point of view is to be heard and considered.

The first sections of the Code, relating to sorcery and theft, do not mention women, except in respect to female slaves, who are included among property that may not be stolen. The earliest point of interest is to be found in the military section, where it is decreed that if a soldier has become a prisoner during a campaign ("taken in a misfortune of the King," as one translation naïvely expresses it), and his son is too young to manage his property, a third of the whole shall be given to his mother, and she shall bring him up; the remainder of the property is "given to another to administer," and if the soldier returns, all shall be handed back to him.

Women bear no part in the Agricultural and Irrigation Sections which follow. In the middle of these comes the erasure described, and when the continuity is resumed, the Code is found to be dealing with commercial affairs. Four ordinances relate to the sale of wine, which appears to be entirely in the hands of women. If a wine-seller or innkeeper gives false measure, she is to be "thrown into the water"; if she allows rebels to meet in her house unmolested, she "shall be slain." In this Trade Section is an instance of the King's high conception of motherhood. If a man has contracted a debt, and cannot pay in silver or corn (the customary currencies of Babylonia), he can assign a male or female slave for his creditor to sell; but in the case of a slave who has borne him children, "the lord of the slave shall pay back the silver the trader has given him

and the slave shall be free." The beauty of this is marred somewhat by a neighbouring sentence, which allows a debtor to pay by the loan of his wife or child, as a hostage, for three years' service. However, a father, in arranging his daughter's marriage settlements, can bind the husband not to assign her to a creditor.

The earlier tribal system of marriage by capture is entirely absent, and marriage settlements play an important part in the Babylonian *régime*. Many marriage contract tablets have been found, and they are full of details respecting the bride-price paid to the woman's father, the dowry settled on her, arrangements relating to the children, inheritance, and many other matters. In many cases the bride's virginity is guaranteed. Property settled on the wife at marriage remains hers absolutely. She may not at any time part with her dowry. She can bequeath everything to her children in any manner she likes, but is forbidden to give anything to her own family. If she dies before her husband, the dowry passes to her children. If she dies childless, bride-price and dowry are returned to her father; sometimes, it seems, the father-in-law has returned the bride-price at marriage, in order perhaps to give the young couple a good start with their housekeeping. The husband is bound to allow his wife a "son's portion" by way of pocket-money, but if he settles nothing more on her, her dowry becomes her private property; though, as she is not allowed to part with it, which can only mean "spend" it, it is not clear to what this permission amounts in practice.

The laws relating to concubinage are rather obscure. The concubine carried bride-price and dowry, and must have been a sort of inferior wife, not necessarily of lower rank than her husband. If the principal wife is childless, a man may marry a concubine, but it is distinctly stated that she shall not rank with the wife. The secondary marriage is probably a wise arrangement to procure legitimate children to inherit the family estate. It seems, too, that a wife may, if she pleases, prevent this secondary marriage by giving her husband a slave to bear him children, whom he can legally adopt; but if this slave assumes a vain-glorious conceit on the subject, "she shall be fettered and counted among the slaves." She may not be sold, unless she too is childless. With regard to this point it is interesting to

remember the story of Sarai and Hagar as told in the sixteenth chapter of Genesis.

The laws of inheritance are fair and just. For instance, in the case of a man twice married, with two families, each family takes the dowry of its respective mother, while the father's property is shared equally. If a man during his life has legally adopted his children by a slave, they succeed to a secondary share of his property. In any case, the slave and her children are emancipated at his death. Special provisions are made for the daughter of a concubine. If she marries during her father's lifetime and receives dowry, she has no further claim on his estate; otherwise it is the duty of her brothers to provide both dowry and husband.

A man guilty of breach of promise must sacrifice the bride-price he has paid. If the father of the girl alters his mind about the marriage, he must repay the bride-price doubled. If slander has been the cause of the trouble, the slanderer may not marry the girl.

Very humane are the laws relating to the invalid wife. The man may marry again, but must support her as long as she lives; unless she prefer to reclaim her dowry and return to her father's house. It may be mentioned here that a married woman always remains a member of her father's family, and is generally described on the contract tablets as the "daughter of" So-and-so, not "the wife of," as might be expected.

If a male slave marries the daughter of a free-man (which must surely have been most unusual), half their joint property passes to the owner of the slave at the husband's death; but at no time has the slave-owner any claim on their children.

A virgin could in no case choose her own husband; but a woman once married was free for the rest of her life, whether she be divorced or widowed, to do as she likes in regard to any subsequent marriage, the one condition being that a widow with infant children may not marry again without the consent of the judge, who must assure himself that the second husband has the means and goodwill to bring up the children in a satisfactory manner. The first husband's property is then inventoried and preserved by deed for his children.

In the case of a married woman committing adultery, both woman *and* man are to be "bound and thrown into the water"; but if the husband pardons his wife and takes her back, the King is at liberty to pardon the paramour. If a man "has forced" the betrothed of another man, he "shall be slain," but the woman is to be considered guiltless. A wife accused unjustly by her husband of unfaithfulness may swear that she is innocent and return to her house. Special provisions exist for the wife of a prisoner; if she has had food, she is punished for adultery by drowning, but if she has been starving she bears no blame; in the latter case, if she has children by the second man, she must leave them with him when she returns to her husband.

A man could divorce his wife or concubine on the ground of childlessness; or, apparently, on no ground at all. But he must return her dowry, or, if she had no dowry, must provide maintenance. She always keeps the children and their father must make her an allowance on which to bring them up. When the children are full-grown she takes a "son's portion" and is at liberty to marry again. If she bears children by both husbands, they share her dowry at her death. Among the provocations which give the wife the right to divorce are "the going out" of her husband, which is thought to mean adultery on his part; and "belittling," the exact significance of which is not clear; it may possibly mean physical cruelty. But it is evident that the husband's behaviour has to be considered in every case of divorce. A woman who has taken a dislike to her husband and denies him conjugal rights, and who has "set her face to depart," could apply for a divorce. If the judicial inquiry resulted in her favour and she was proved blameless, she won her suit, and could take her dowry and return to her family, but she could claim no maintenance. If it were proved that she had been unfaithful, she was treated as an adulteress and drowned. If there were no question of infidelity, but she had been a bad wife, "guilty of dissipation, wasted her house, and neglected her husband," her fate seemed to rest with the husband, who could divorce her outright, or could degrade her to the position of a slave, which left him free to marry again. The dreadful punishment of impalement upon a stake is allotted to the woman who kills her husband "because of another male." This,

oddly enough, is the only place in the Code in which murder is mentioned. If a man deserts his wife, leaving her unprovided for, she is free to "enter the house of another," and he has no claim on her should he return. Domestic quarrels are settled by the Judge, whose business it is to see that a mother is not "annoyed" by her children.

A man who "points his finger" at a priestess or at the wife of another man "shall be thrown before the judge and his brow shall be branded," which is certainly a most sensible punishment!

A father guilty of incest with his daughter is banished; if with his son's betrothed, he is drowned or fined, the woman being at liberty to break off the engagement; if a son be guilty of incest with his mother, both are burned alive; if with another "lady" of his father, he is disinherited.

A foster-mother, whose charge dies, and who substitutes another child, is punished by having her breasts cut off.

A great many ordinances relate to punishment for physical injury of various kinds. Among these, six apply to an assault on a woman which results in miscarriage. In any case the assailant is fined in amounts which vary with the victim's rank, the smallest being for the slave woman. In the event of the woman's death, there is further punishment, and here we find an instance of the ancient "eye-for-eye" system; if the victim of the assault is the daughter of a freeman, then the assailant's daughter is to be slain; in other cases there are only additional fines.

In most ancient communities the Priestess was honoured and feared, and the Hammurabi Code shows that Babylonia was no exception. As has been stated, a man who insulted a priestess was branded. Further, the priestesses themselves seem to have been under as strict a rule as were the Vestals of Imperial Rome. It is particularly decreed in the Trade Section of the Code that a priestess who opens a wine-shop, or even enters one for drink, shall be burned. The Temple formed a little community by itself, and as there is no mention of celibacy, it is assumed that the priesthood included married men. It is thought that there were six ranks of priestesses, four of whom were married. The highest class consisted of ladies of high rank; another class was formed of the unmarried votaries, who lived like nuns of later times, in their own convent under an abbess.

A votary could marry and leave her convent, but she must remain a virgin, and must provide her husband with a maid if he wished to have a family. The reason for this extraordinary arrangement must have been the vast gap which obviously existed between the position of the married woman and that of the unmarried. If a girl were left an orphan, she could, by assuming thus the status of a married woman, be protected from slander; the position, too, was one of greater freedom. The votaries of another class were vowed to chastity and always remained unmarried, and cases are frequently found of the adoption of a girl by one of these ladies for the care of her old age, and as her heiress. A woman when she became a priestess carried dowry, and one who had received it in the form of real estate can, at her father's death, leave its management to her brother, or may appoint an overseer; but she may not sell it nor give it away. She is free to bequeath it as she wishes; her brothers have no claim. A dowerless priestess can claim, at her father's death, one son's portion of his estate for her use, but it returns to her family at her death. An unmarried priestess takes only one-third of this portion, which in some cases passes to her brothers, in others can be bequeathed as she desires. A class of prostitute votaries existed, and certain clauses of the Code relate to the adoption of their unacknowledged children. This seems to point to a system of regulated vice within the precincts of the Temple.

It will be seen that Hammurabi, wise king though he was, has left a great many loose ends in the weaving of his wonderful Code. Obviously he has tried to arrange for every possible contingency, but has by no means succeeded in doing so. To quote one instance only, in the case of a husband deserting his wife, nothing is said as to what is to become of the children. The Code is all blacks and whites; there are no greys; there are no slight punishments, nothing for women less dreadful than having the breasts cut off. Finally, where is there room in a community conducted on lines such as these for the famous "Woman of Babylon"? Did she belong to another period, or is it that she is but the fruit of the fevered imagination of the anti-Suffragist of those times?

# In a Walled Garden

By Catherine Wells

THERE are people who seem to fashion the fabric of their lives as an uninspired but painstaking artist will make a water-colour sketch, working every corner of it very carefully into a state of high finish, slurring no detail that their sensitive ingenuity can embellish, and achieving at last a meticulous perfection of harmonious living stippled delicately with flowers and pretty furniture and slim leather-bound books and comely clothes, all very thoughtfully placed and shining in the sun. In such lives birth has a very little place and death none at all, and the toil and heat of life and the pageant of its triumph and its failure pass by remotely, outside the white curtains that shade its tenderly coloured rooms. If ever a hand from that world without should pull aside the curtain for a moment and the face of Reality look in, it is prudent for the custodian of such a peacefulness to turn away until the intruder has passed, and presently hang up a little clean and spotless curtain in the place of the one that his browned and dusty hand has touched. So tranquillity may be preserved.

But sometimes it happens that Reality, having passed on, has not done with his disturbing. The memory of the shaft of sunlight, the breeze of strong air that came in when he pulled open the curtain so rudely, the memory of the shattering challenge of his glance, may grow more mercilessly commanding and appear more clamantly beautiful, the further it has gone beyond recall. The circumspect life within becomes meaningless and without savour; its moral value may have mysteriously evaporated. All the brave and shining things in life, all the worthy things will seem to have slipped out through that chink of freedom into the open world. This escape of virtue from the known to the unknown, from the sheltered and

safe to the hazardous and socially adventurous, was what happened in the mind of Rosalind Bray as her youth passed. There came to her moments when she could have found it in herself to run out into the world, with hands outstretched and pleading, for the mere hazard of a few miles along the way with Reality's sunburnt arm about her neck.

Rosalind Bray, or to give her her unmarried name, Ellen Adams, was an only daughter in a small suburban middle-class family. Her father was a solicitor, and with that advantage it was obvious that her only brother should be called to the Bar. She received the perfunctory education that keeps middle-class girls unspotted by knowledge, and when she left school her parents took no measures whatever to enlarge her horizon of choice, and hopefully expected her to marry. Edgar Bray drifted into her world by the purest accident, and profited by its limits. He was thirty when she was twenty, and thin and dark and solemn in the Scottish manner. His fine dark eyes and the facility with which they expressed humble adoration or wounded dejection, or an anguish of unattainable longing, emotions which were the counters of his courtship, were the chief asset of his passable handsomeness; and their persistent siege, heartily endorsed by parental approval, overcame the immature, soft-hearted young girl very easily. The manner of their ensuing marriage was quite beautifully thought out by Bray himself, and every line of the service was given its value by the excellent voice of the old college friend whom he got to officiate.

Her Christian name, as I have said, was really Ellen, but it was only one of the many graceful gifts with which her husband adorned her to select and fasten upon her a name that should better satisfy his ear. She was not more than common tall indeed, though of a slenderness that made her seem so when she stood alone. It may have been the suggestion of the green forest place they were in that sent the name of Shakespear's Rosalind to Edgar Bray's mind, to be straightway fitted on his new-made wife. "Baptise me, then," she had said laughing. She lay with her head propped upon her elbow close to a tiny stream of water that slid by among the mossy stones, and she had a frolic idea that he would splash her face and neck with a

rain of water drops, cold drops that would run deliciously down her skin. And she would splash him back. But instead he had kissed her very solemnly on the brow in a dedicatory manner, and whispered, "My Rosalind! My queen of the forest!"

It had all been very much like that. Bray made love to her delicately and reverently, and Rosalind, after an interval of puzzled discovery, settled down to her married life with a feeling of faint disappointment that she could hardly justify, seeing how exceptionally suited to one another her family considered her and Bray to be. Her world was so emphatic in declaring her marriage a most happy one that Rosalind fell into accepting it at that value. She wondered what it was she had expected that could possibly be missing. She was never aware that as the years went on they robbed her of her trick of sudden laughter, and left her utmost responsiveness a smile.

The Brays had no sordid cares to trouble them. Edgar Bray, as a younger son, had inherited about five hundred a year from his father, who had been a prosperous banker, and unsympathetic with the scheme for a quiet life devoted to literary art which Edgar, when he came to maturity, outlined as his purpose. So the bulk of the money had gone to the elder brother. But, by the time he married Rosalind, Bray had achieved a modest position in the world of letters which gave him a yearly increment of another two or three hundred. He was a serious and acceptable, if superfluous, essayist, he wrote and published verse, and the stimulus of foreign travel applied to Bray would result with the certainty of a reflex in a book which, he was assured in short but indisputably favourable reviews, had a charm of manner quite his own. All that came to give Bray, and his home, and his wife, a pleasant distinction, and an unobtrusive but definite place among cultured people. He had an easy way with a piano too, and would sing the love songs of Schubert and Brahms to Rosalind very charmingly, so far as his rather delicate throat would allow him.

The question of just where to make the home that was to enshrine his Rosalind troubled Bray a good deal. They lived for two years in a really idyllic country cottage, but the winters there, and social intercourse consisting almost exclusively of her husband, produced a pallor and thinness

in Rosalind that was reluctantly attributed to the gravel soil. So Bray, after a careful and exhaustive search, transferred her to an old and extraordinarily charming little house at Chiswick, whose large and very beautiful garden gave her occupation and a great deal of pleasure. Rosalind had a natural aptitude for colour and arrangement, and a woman's love of prettiness, and with Bray at her elbow planning and appraising, and searching and judiciously purchasing, she set out with immense interest to make her home, a house that it was almost their prime occupation to care for and further embellish. Rosalind furnished, indeed, with all the delicate thought and care and the streaks of happy instinct of a woman making love. She expressed her personality through and through that house and garden, making of it a richly-coloured setting for herself, a sort of extraneous garment, as if she were indeed adorning herself for her lover. And somehow Bray remained indisputably only her humble servitor in the background. About this house moved Rosalind, a graceful figure of womanhood, dressed in carefully designed dainty garments of an old-world style that suited her best. That is to say, she dressed like that when she was at home and within the high old walls of her garden; outside that fastness she wore clothes of the current fashion, for the Brays would have disliked nothing more than to be remarked. Perhaps the necessary change deterred her from taking quite so much exercise as would have been good for her.

It will be seen that the Brays had no children. Indeed, they spent every penny they had upon their pretty life, and the advent of children would have disturbed the delicate balance of their comfort. Not that Bray was insensitive to the emotional value of parentage. Someday, somewhen, a child was to come and, as he said, "complete their lives." It was to be, so to speak, their final purchase, the last pretty touch they could give to their home, to add that child. It figured always in Bray's mind as a little girl, fair-haired like her mother, of a stationary age somewhere between two and seven years old.

One year after another passed. It was understood that there was plenty of time for that.

Rosalind acquiesced in that tacit arrangement as she accepted all the other disposals of herself that life made.

She was not given to introspection of a very searching kind, her mind had received no training that should stiffen it to inquiry, and it was only as the presence of a faint discontent that she felt that her years were passing aimlessly, that now the interest of home-making was over she had nothing whatever to do, that the days stretched before her holding each a large vacant space of time, that Bray was beginning to bore her a good deal and had long silent spells that passed occasionally into melancholia and even into an apathy resembling sulkiness, and that the sort of thing that particularly bored her was to feel as she would on many an early summer morning in her garden, delightfully well and light-limbed and young, and to spend such a day quite inconsequently just as she had spent innumerable such days before, and see it end like a glorious setting with a cavity of hours that some jewelled memory should have filled. She was perhaps instinctively afraid of such a realisation, and so avoided thinking about it. But she could not always be on her guard against accidental glimpses of wider possibilities. Now and again it would happen that something would chance to pierce her seclusion and trouble her with the thought that there were other ways of life more worth the living that might be achieved outside the little backwater in which she was so safely kept.

There was, for instance, a little incident, slight in its reality as the brushing of a moth's wing in flight against her cheek, that will do well enough to take as typical. It happened on a summer's morning some seven years after her marriage, and Rosalind was in her garden alone. They had had breakfast in the garden, and Bray, after talking the matter over with her and getting annoyed because the sun dazzled his eyes, had gone into London to arrange with his publisher the colour and texture of the cover for his forthcoming book of poems. Rosalind walked about her garden, stopping here and there and looking at the brilliance of summer flowers which crowded about her in such gallant masses. The garden borders were so high and thick with blossoming growth that her housemaid had some difficulty in finding her, until at last she came upon her worshipping the great white clematis that hung upon the wall by the old greenhouse, and announced that the photographer from Brandon's had arrived.

Rosalind had forgotten all about the photographer from Brandon's. So evidently, she realised, had Bray himself, since he had gone out on the morning appointed for the sitting offered by that celebrity-hunting firm. Rosalind went indoors to apologise.

When she reached the door of her drawing-room she became aware that the photographer from Brandon's had already extensively unpacked. An immense camera had drawn itself aloft on a massive tripod, and faced her with a vast dark muzzle, plate-carriers of imposing size were piled generously on an adjacent table, and before one of the leather cases that were scattered over the floor knelt a young man with his back to her, and scrabbled in its interior. He was half hidden by a chair, and Rosalind saw him merely as brown boots and long legs in leather gaiters and a knickerbockered knee. And chiefly she was looking at the camera.

"Good-morning," said Rosalind to the camera and the boots.

The young man shot up to his feet and held himself erect, facing her.

At the sight of him her heart gave a queer little jump. She thought he was the most handsome thing she had ever seen. There was something in the sun tan on his skin that sent her thoughts flying to mountains and the sea.

And the young man saw Rosalind for the pretty creature that she was, her fair-skinned blondness softly outlined against the shadow of the door, clothed in cool pale blue linen, with little muslin daintinesses around her wrists and throat.

For an instant they stood still face to face, and looked at one another. The first astonishment in his eyes had given place to a look of delight at the sight of her that called the colour into her cheeks. In Rosalind's mind at that moment there was no atom of doubt as to the thought that had leapt into his. She felt the silent air between them as thick charged with meaning as if he had that instant called aloud to her, "Mate of mine! Found! Found!" Foolishly, irrationally, her heart began to beat fast, and with an automatic resumption of her original intention, she began:

"My husband——"

The young man's head went back with a little jerk, as if he had been lightly struck. Then he swung round to the camera with the gesture of a servant going back to his servitude, as to something he had forgotten, and gave her an indifferent shoulder.

"I'm afraid my husband has forgotten," stammered Rosalind, colouring now hotly with the odd little twist that had been given to her emotions.

He turned again. "Yes?" he inquired curtly.

Rosalind recovered herself. "Mr. Bray has gone to London to-day," she explained. "I'm afraid—I'm quite sure—he has forgotten you were coming."

"Oh!" said the young man blankly, looking at her again.

She waited.

"I'll pack up then," he said, with formal politeness.

Confused and quite inexplicable sensations were making their tumult in Rosalind still.

"I am so sorry," she said slowly.

Why was it that once that was said it seemed to mean something quite other than her intention? "I am really so very sorry," she faltered. It was ridiculous, it was monstrous, that such things should come into her head, but in a most curious manner she felt that in that simple remark she was apologising for the absurd blunder she had made in marrying Bray.

"Thank you," he replied, "it doesn't matter," and went on packing up, unscrewing the lens of the great camera with an expert twirl, and clapping together the tripod stand into a bundle of rods.

"If you don't mind," he said, pulling straps and not looking at her, "a boy will call for these traps in about half an hour."

"Certainly," she answered.

He turned to go. She wanted to keep him there, wanted to explain herself to him, and could not think of any possible way to do so that seemed consistent with her dignity. She felt that nothing had happened between them, and yet that everything had happened. She went before him out of the room to the open front door of the house. There was a bicycle titled against the hedge.

"Good-morning," he said; took the bicycle, swung into its saddle, and was gone.

Rosalind stood still for a moment, and then went back into the drawing-room with the queerest feeling of elation lifting her heart. The first sight of the heap of strapped leather cases thrilled her as if she had been kissed. Her eyes were bright and her cheeks hot, her hands were cold, and she pressed them against her cheeks to cool their flush. What had there been in that glance that had lit in her this mysterious fire?

She walked about the room, touching things here and there, still with a flush in her cheeks and a little smile about her lips. She wondered what manner of man he was. She tried to recall his face exactly, and found that her memory played her the trick of giving her no continuous picture of him. He was that tweed-clad, stalwart figure with the light brown hair, and for the rest his face remained obstinately blurred. And then as she came to the door of the room some disarrangement of the furniture as she looked back to the place where he had stood, recalled his face to her quite vividly, and she felt again that little clutch upon her heart.

She knew what it was that had flashed to her from his eyes. She knew all that it meant, the ultimate demand, the ultimate tribute and homage from a man to a woman. "Beautiful, worshipful thing!" it had said. "You are my mate. You are she, you are she! You are she that should be flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone. You are she!"

She began to imagine the response to that demand, the high-spirited, adventurous quality of it, the test it would make of one's courage and one's pluck.

"Ugh!" she said to herself; "am I a decent, sensible woman, or a novelette-reading fool?" And she went out into her garden, disconcerted and ashamed.

But her thoughts, thoughts that she told herself were unworthy of her dignity and self-respect, raced along their way like a team of horses utterly beyond her control. They did but drag her with them, holding on powerlessly to their reins. She could not suppress the feeling that surged up in her that something extraordinarily sweet and delightful had happened to her, something suddenly

awakening and refreshing. There were times indeed when she deliberately allowed herself to sit hidden among drooping leafage on a remote garden seat, and hug to her heart the memory of that glance, like a child that had hidden itself to enjoy forbidden sweets. She told herself that only by thus letting her mind exhaust the thing would it trouble her no more.

But indeed she found that to fatigue out the sharpness of that particular impression was only the beginning of her disturbance.

When Bray came home she put off telling him for a time of the coming of Brandon's photographer, afraid that something in her voice would betray her, and when at last she did tell him she was amazed that she was able to do so quite easily. She marvelled that he did not ask her more questions, and only remarked that he would appoint another day, or go to Brandon's studio himself.

"Don't do that," urged Rosalind, on an impulse that terrified so soon as it had moved her. "It will be much more successful if you have it done here. The atmosphere of a photographer's is so stiffening."

Bray agreed. "Do you mind writing to them for me?" he said.

"Very well," answered Rosalind, in a faded voice. She detested herself now for the commonplace manœuvre. At any rate, she could and would put herself right by being out when he came.

"Rosalind mine!" murmured Bray.

He leant over the table. They had been dining in the verandah.

She started from her abstraction and looked at him. The dim, rosily-flowered globes of paper Japanese lamps glowed on either side before her.

Bray gazed upon her with sombre eyes. "How beautiful you look there!" he said. "Do you know, when I feel the dust and heat of this great toiling city as I did this morning, and contrast the complete and beautiful life we lead here. . . ." He paused, a little tangled with his sentence.

"Yes?" she asked.

"It seems almost greedy," he said. "As though we had sucked away all its happiness and loveliness and content, and held it prisoner ourselves."

His gaze upon her became abstracted. With a little nursing there would be a lyric in that.

And Rosalind fell back into her own preoccupations.

Five days passed before the fresh appointment fell due. With the best intention in the world Rosalind could not suppress a lifting expectancy as those days went by. It was futile for her to tell herself that nothing more could happen, while some impish hope was going about in her brain insisting that it could. But whatever went on among her rebel thoughts, Rosalind remained heroic mistress of her actions, and when that morning came she set herself a penance for her foolishness and went out.

When she started she was very satisfied with herself for that, and when she was half-an-hour away she was acutely sorry that she had done it. She hurried home, telling herself that the time had passed when he would have come and gone.

She opened the garden gate and met Bray coming out. "I've sat to Brandon's man," he said. "He's just packing up. I'm afraid I can't get home to lunch, Rosa Mundi."

She went into the drawing-room, trembling a little, and found a little old man with a long beard taking a camera to pieces with infinite leisureliness. . . .

That was all, and Rosalind tried to think that she was glad to have escaped an embarrassment. And, none the less, like some little carelessly-dropped seed, this new emotion, and the thoughts that sprang from it, stirred and grew and spread. There came times when she doubted very thoroughly if that odd encounter of eyes had ever happened outside what she told herself was her own vanity-fed imagination; others when the sudden memory of it pricked about her heart again with stealthy pleasure. It was months before the stir of it faded from her mind.

And afterwards she had moods when she reproached herself for the idleness that left her a prey to such imaginings, and pondered whether she could not find some sort of work to fill her days. She thought first of one and then of another of the various movements in which she might involve herself, but the idea of artificially-induced occupation, for which she knew she felt not the least real desire, repelled her. "I wonder what it is I am meant for?" she repeated over and over again.

"I am an idle woman, leading an idle, useless life," she announced to herself.

She went a step further. "Am I to go on living like this?"

But if it was not to go on, what could she do to alter it? Women, she thought, have no chance in the world whatever to do serious work once they are married. "Serious work" remained a vague term to her.

One day she happened upon a novel by a writer of the modern school that made some obvious suggestions. "Of course, the right and honourable work, the work that lies naturally to a woman's hand, *is* to bring up children," she admitted to herself after reading it. "Why have I no children?"

Why had she no children? She had never faced that out before.

Did she, she wondered, want children?

She was standing in the broad gravel path near the boundary of her garden, looking up at the high old wall as if it made a prison for her. "I am young," she said bitterly, "I am young and I am beautiful really, and what is it all for? What is going to be the good of it? Why do I not at least have children? Here are life and youth and opportunity passing by, they are mine now and they are passing, and soon I shall have no more youth and no more opportunity. I am as if I held life's gold between my hands, and let it slip, and slip. Why am I doing that? Soon it will be gone, and mingled in the sand at my feet. Why cannot I take my work, if that is my work, and grip it and make it my own?"

She had a vision of the children she might have. She remembered the fair soft skin of some children she knew, and thought of flaxen hair, fine and soft and shining, that would presently deepen to ruddy gold. The picture warmed her heart to tender excitement. She saw them adolescent, big-limbed, tall and broad-shouldered, stepping proudly about a world that was their inheritance.

And then it occurred to her a little chillingly that Bray's children would not be like that.

But she dared not go on with that particular train of thought, and indeed she hardly allowed it to come to the surface of her mind again. Perhaps some instinct warned

her that it would have led her to an unbearable realisation. For over the threshold of that thought, the threshold on which her mind trembled and turned away, lay the knowledge that it was not Bray's child that she desired, but the child of some big fair man, with limbs of a strength that outmatched her strength, and a sun-tanned skin that sent her thoughts flying to mountains and the sea.

# Willie Pink

By Chris Massie

WILLIE PINK had not thought much about life. His association with a middle-class grammar school convinced him in the belief that he was not "much good." His one great ambition was to be a carpenter, but as this was not considered desirable, he had meekly placed himself in the hands of his parents, who had innocently plotted to ruin him.

Willie's parents were very nice people; they lived in a quiet street in a quiet suburb, where it was not considered respectable to keep fowls. Respectability is the sternest of all religions, and Willie's parents were bent on making him a gentleman. They saw the necessity for moulding his character, and in many grave lessons they taught him the meaning of "propriety" and "social responsibility." He was tractable, but without gift of discernment. He wanted to get into a trade where he could develop a proclivity for carving pieces of wood into boats and things. But as it turned out, the boats were used to beguile him from his ambition, for it suggested the idea of putting him into a shipping office, where his ability might be turned to some practical account.

He was very sorry to think how innocent his parents were; but having thought the matter out, and blubbed a little, he made up his mind it was better to give in than "kick up a jolly row." And so Willie Pink was sacrificed on the altar of respectability—and his life was ruined. Not having the gift of discernment, it never occurred to him to blame his parents for starting him off against the wind. He blamed himself and the silly old grammar school which could teach him nothing but football and cricket. He felt deeply sorry for his parents, and rather sorry for Willie Pink; it would have been so much better for him had his parents not been quite such nice people. He wanted to

do something with his hands; but of course that was not respectable.

Why wasn't it respectable? Willie did not ask himself that. It simply wasn't respectable; further than that his imagination could not penetrate.

And yet he had imagination—a nimble, cunning dexterity to carve things into queer antediluvian shapes. In India or Japan he would have been a great craftsman, and, failing broader sympathies, his parents would have left him alone with a handful of rice. But he did not know anything about art. The artistic temperament in Willie Pink was original sin, as perhaps it is in other people. He was inclined to believe with his parents that wood-carving was a particularly vicious form of laziness; but, nevertheless, the occupation had grown into a habit, a craving he could not give up.

In younger years his parents had followed the antics of his brain with some kindliness and curiosity, but now his genius had become an impediment to life, so no longer they gave him encouragement. . . .

In the office of Brock, Willis and Company, Willie Pink was a distinct and uncompromising failure. He did not want to worry the old people, but every day of this for ever was more than flesh and blood could stand. . . . He was trying to get on a ship—to get away. . . . If only he could be a sailor.

In quite remarkable fashion Willie's wish came to be realised. It came about through Mr. Brock "talking him over" in the presence of Mr. Willis and Nutter, the cashier.

"The lad seems to have no ambition, Nutter," he remarked. "Inconceivable to me, with the whole world before him."

"The whole world," echoed Mr. Nutter, glancing at a map of the two hemispheres on the opposite wall.

"What reason has he for staying?" questioned the mild Mr. Willis.

"I'm sure there's no encouragement held out," replied Nutter, deferentially. "Perhaps you would like to speak to the lad yourselves? I can't understand him at all." Mr. Brock rang a small bell, and Pink was produced like a conjuring trick.

"Well, Pink," began Mr. Brock, "you have been with

us three years now, and there seems to be some misunderstanding."

"Yes, sir," replied Pink, tightening up the loose corners of his mouth.

"Not that we complain of your work," continued the senior partner, noticing his embarrassment. "There are other considerations you know. In short, everybody can't get on in this office, and we think we do our duty in promising you an excellent character if——"

"If necessary," put in Mr. Willis helpfully.

"When necessary," corrected Mr. Brock. "Have you no ambition in life, my boy?"

"I think I should like to be a sailor," spluttered Willie.

"Well, we can help him there, said Mr. Willis, rubbing his hands, and smiling. "We can help him there, can't we?"

"Have you thought seriously of this?" continued Mr. Brock. "Have you considered what a serious step it is?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I'll think the matter over. You can go."

---

Arrangements had been made for Willie to join the S.S. *Europe* at the Millwall Docks, where she was loading a general cargo, destined for the States.

Friday, the twenty-fifth of June, marked the end of his troubles as far as Brock, Willis and Company were concerned. The weary ebb of the day found him clearing out his desk in the presence of Johnny Smithers, the office boy, who saw in the exodus of Willie a rise in salary and position.

Quite a mass of rubbish had accumulated during his three sad years of business experience. There were programmes of concerts, mostly held at the schoolroom connected with Christ Church, postcards relating to cricket and football matches, and a number of grotesque carvings in wood, elaborately oriental, the last he had done. His "ready reckoner" daubed with ink stains, a pen-holder chewed to fibre, and a knotchy ruler were the surviving relics of his agony. These he gave to Johnny.

"It's a pity you're going," said Johnny, softening.

"Yes," replied Willie, "I'm rather sorry myself for some things. There's the old people, you know. I don't like to worry the old people; but what would have hap-

pened to me if I'd stayed on. That's what I want to know."

"Nothing," answered Johnny. "If you'd have gone in for it properly."

"Nothing! Ah, now you've got it!" retorted Pink. "My life's full of nothing, and I'm sick of it. Nothing has been the curse of me all the time I've been here. I've got nothing to look back on, nothing to look forward to. My parents, who brought me up and taught me to be a decent fellow, sent me here to lick stamps all my life, but I can't stand it. I've got no taste for figures; I was made for something not so respectable as that—fricking about with wood. . . . But you can't make any money at that, can you . . . unless . . . unless you're a genius?"

"I'm sorry for you," said Johnny.

"Yes, I'm sure you are," replied Willie, brightening "Shake hands on it, old man!"

They shook hands on it, and Willie turned away to the door. For a moment he stood, looking round to see if anyone noticed him, if anyone cared; but no one seemed conscious of that tremendous moment, so he slipped out of the room and ran hastily down the stone steps. . . .

The next moment Willie was in Leadenhall Street, buying a cigarette-holder.

---

Willie was a little disappointed with the sea. He had broken several dishes, and something there was yet remaining to him of his grammar-school training which was not appreciated by the crew.

When he touched port there was always one or other of the ship-lads who knew exactly where to go for amusement. One thing was certain: he was becoming a man as fast as human nature would let him. A smear of down on his upper lip proved this. It was one of the joys of his life, and when no one was looking he stroked it reverently with his forefinger. . . .

Willie was not a bad sort of boy. A little more intelligence in his face would have made him quite attractive; but somehow the threads of his life had got tangled, and no one took any interest in him. A sensible girl with a pretty face might have shown him an old-fashioned way of becoming a man. Willie would have stooped a good deal

to learn—he was so tractable; but when left to himself there was no telling what might happen, for Willie had no gift of discernment. His poverty-stricken soul was looking about hungrily for something to feed on—a human interest to cover up the naked parts of his character, and make life worth living.

He could not support himself from within, though for six years he had attended every Sunday service at Christ Church. When he thought about God, when he prayed to Him, he conjured up the image of a stern man with a long grey beard, sitting on a throne, with angels at his feet, blowing trumpets. He had seen something like this in a picture-book when he was a child, and nothing in his subsequent religious training had shown reason why he should resign it as obsolete.

England, home, and beauty, St. Paul's Cathedral and the Houses of Parliament . . . what were they to Willie Pink? He did not know the meaning of himself; how could he understand the movement of the world? It was like a bad dream. Something was wrong—something that hurt terribly, but what it was his dim intelligence could never seize. . . .

When he got back to London from his Australian trip his intentions were of the best. He would have done anything to put himself right with the old people; but having been paid he could not part company with his shipmates without "doing the thing properly." He had learnt very thoroughly all it is necessary to learn in order to become a man.

In a little pub down by the Docks the final seal was set upon his destiny. For a few short hours he tasted the rosy apple of experience . . . the day slipped silently into the river, the stars blinked painfully through the mist; he heard the melancholy tooting of the steamboats, and a vague, idiotic smile eclipsed the last glimmer of intelligence from his face.

He was quite happy when someone roused him. He was not drunk—but if he was he didn't want to go home. He wanted to walk by himself and think about it; but his shipmates were as anxious as he was to "do the thing properly."

A feeble resistance was all he could make: the words

fell purposelessly from his lips—he was beginning to feel ill, and his heart was troubled.

"Ye—es," he stuttered. "Bes' go home after all. Isn't it?" They burst out into a chorus of laughter, and the blood rushed to his face.

"Lemme go!" he screamed hysterically. "You're hurting me. Lemme go, can't you?"

They told him it was no good, and he accepted their word. Not long after, Willie stood meekly before the door at No. 45, Rotherham Road, Lordship Park, where he had lived in the days of his respectability. His shipmates had knocked and fled. He, too, felt like running away, but it was "no good: was it?"

He accepted what followed without any show of passion, and without uttering a word of remonstrance. "All right," he said demurely, "if I'm not wanted, I'll go."

He staggered out into the street, and walked about aimlessly till morning broke. At noon he ventured home and tried to engage his parents with talk of what had happened to him abroad, but their dark looks compelled him to silence. For days he waited moodily in hope of forgiveness till the strain was too much for him, and a sudden gust of agony set his whole nature ablaze.

"Anyone would think," he said, quivering with passion, "that I'd done a murder or something. You've treated me like cads, and I can't stand it any longer. I'm going away for good, and so now you're well rid of me."

He flung out of the house, and slammed the door behind him. . . .

After a few drinks he sauntered out towards the river. It was a misty, melancholy place. He stayed awhile looking over into the inky water, his soft, undeveloped features bent down, and his fixed eyes dropping tears into the flood. He had only got to wait now for things to happen to him. The last rag of self-respect was torn from his back. His people were impossible people, and he was impossible—the world was impossible, and all he could do in it was to wander about.

He did this. . . . For a week he was able to keep the wolf from the door. Nightly he slept in one or other of the low lodging-houses along the riverside, and during

the day he tried in vain to obtain a ship. One of the least of his miseries was that he could not keep himself clean; it was part of his respectable bringing up that he should wish to do so.

Everything was against him. He was beginning to feel the keen shafts of hunger, and his face was putting on the strong lines of agony. His parents had rendered it impossible for him to go back—he was a blackguard and a scoundrel. What then was he to do?

It occurred to him that once more he might revert to wood-carving. For this purpose he collected cocoanut shells, rubbing them smooth with rough stone, and carving them into shields with his jack-knife. On these he made what shapes his bewildered brain could imagine, and sold them when he could to passers by. Some of them were works of art, worthy of the great artists in the childhood of time. But Willie knew nothing about this—he was starving. . . .

In the musing of his tortured mind he suddenly remembered that he had an uncle at Stormbridge. An extravagant hope like red wine sent the blood rushing through his veins. Uncle Joseph Pink had been something of a hero to him in the past—a man of heroic pretensions with a bluff, easy manner, just such a one as would forgive him, and make light of his evil doings.

His mind was made up at the very inception of the idea. Though it was sixty-five miles to Stormbridge, his spirits rose and he began to whistle a chanty. . . . All that night he trudged on, whistling song after song as they occurred to him.

Only once he sank back into the lethargy of despair. While passing through a town he had looked into a shop-window and accidentally seen the reflection of himself in a large mirror.

The ravages of hunger and misery had changed him into an old man—his cheeks had fallen in, his eyes were wild and sunken, his mouth hung loosely open, and his lips were thick and cracked.

"Oh, God!" he moaned. "Am I like that?"

And as he shambled on, every footfall echoed, "God, God, God." . . .

After that he fell to dreaming about his childhood.

When he was not more than six they had given him a clockwork train; but when he touched it a wheel came off.

It was a pitiful symbol of his life: the wheels were always coming off, and the works would never go, and for this he was to be punished.

"After all," he murmured repeatedly, "it's only me. I did it myself, didn't I?"

His humility was the one great thing about him. . . .

The keen east wind swept up and stifled him with its fierce breath. He was hungry, but it didn't matter. During the night he walked on and on, talking to himself about the sea, and wishing it would come to an end. Up the last hill he climbed painfully, and sank down on a meadow outside the village of Stormbridge. There he slept, and the drizzling rain soaked him through. . . . But it was good to sleep. He woke the next morning, shivering and sick, and struggled into the town. The place was hardly familiar to him, but after wandering for some time he came suddenly upon his uncle's cottage. The gate was open, so he entered at once and knocked feebly at the door.

It was opened by a strange woman, who looked at him suspiciously, and inquired his business.

"Does Uncle Pink live here?" he asked hoarsely.

"No; there's no such name in Stormbridge, as I know of," she answered curtly.

Willie's chin dropped upon his breast and his knees trembled.

"I've walked all the way from London," he said, "and now—oh, he can't be gone!"

The woman pressed the door back to a narrow angle. "No such name as I know of," she snapped.

"Before I go, let me sell you one of my wood-carvings," he pleaded. "Give me something to eat."

She looked at him comprehensively, and then down at the work he was offering. . . . Her face softened. "Here, take this," she said, offering him twopence. . . . "I don't want the bit of wood. My man does beautiful fretwork things."

He took it and thanked her . . then once more all the world was before him. . . .

He was now crushed and exhausted. The twopence he spent in bread and cheese, but the food crumbled in his

mouth, and he could not swallow it. Tired, lost, and hopeless, he threw himself down in the shelter of a hedge. The earth rocked him like a cradle, and the night came on at a bound. He could feel everything slipping away from him; there was no sorrow or pain, no hunger or thirst—only his helplessness and the supreme desire to rest.

He lay there till he was roused by someone dragging at his coat. His dim eyes could faintly make out the figure of a rough man with a coarse, bearded face.

"'Ere, this ain't right," he said.

Willie lifted himself up on one elbow and sank back again. "I want to sleep," he muttered. ". . . Sleep . . . can't I sleep?"

The tramp put his arm under Willie, and lifted him to his feet. . . . "Too rough," he said. "I'll show you where you can sleep; it ain't far."

Willie answered nothing, and the two straggled on together. It was nearly six when the lights of Batwortle came in view. By resting frequently they had managed to climb the hill on the other side of the valley, and now they stood under the shadow of a doorway some distance off the main street of the village.

"Here it is," said the tramp. It was the casual ward.

They waited silently for three-quarters of an hour, when the door was thrown open, and the porter admitted them. A little knot of casuals had gathered in the meantime, and they all trooped together like sulky children into a dingy room.

"I want to see the doctor for this chap," said the tramp, addressing himself to the official.

"You won't see him to-day," answered the official. "It ain't his day till next Wednesday."

"You look at 'im," returned the tramp. "He's pretty bad. I've had to 'elp 'im along for a mile."

The porter measured Willie with a cold, calculating eye.

"What's up?" he asked.

"It's here," said Willie, pressing a hand to his chest. The porter turned up the corners of his moustache. "In the morning," he said condescendingly, "I'll see what can be done. For the present I can only let you off having a bath and give you an extra blanket. Will that do?"

"Yes," said Willie. "It doesn't matter."

They stripped and entered a dark, evil-smelling apartment where blankets and boards were provided. A wooden ledge running along the skirting took the place of pillows, and at intervals in the floor ventilation gratings admitted a constant draught.

Some of the casuals were talking together, whilst others munched noisily at their eight-ounce loaves. Willie gave his to the tramp who had assisted him on the road.

"I shan't want mine," he said hoarsely, "you can have it."

"Are you sure you can't eat it?" asked the tramp eagerly.

"This is the best place for bread I know of—it's never more than a day old. If you can't go it, I can, mate."

"Take it," said Willie, drawing the blankets round him.

"It does seem a shame," persisted the tramp. "Best bread for miles, and you can't eat it. . . . Perhaps in the morning?" he suggested.

"No," said Willie, "you eat it."

The man stood in the darkness with the loaf in his hand.

"If you should get worse," he said at last, "call Bob—don't forget."

Willie did not answer, and the tramp still waited, fumbling at the loaf in his hand. He bent down and listened to the quick panting breath, and a great trembling came over him.

"What's the matter?" he asked in a frightened voice.

"More wood," muttered Willie. "I want more wood and a sharper knife. Do you hear? . . . Wood . . . more wood . . . more wood and a little blade to get round with. . . . I don't want bread, I want wood."

The tramp stumbled across the pitch-dark room, disturbing the others, who cursed him. His hand ran along the wall to find an electric bell which communicated with the officials. He tried it several times without response.

"It's no use doing that, mate," said a man lying near him. "The bell's faked. It's only there 'cording to rig'lations of Local Gov'ment Board . . . but it won't ring!"

"There's a bloke over there delirious," replied the tramp. "And you're telling me the rotten devils have cut us off."

"Poor swine! There's a little winder in the privy; let's see if we can make anyone 'ear, any old how."

They broke the window, and shouted through into the silence of night.

"Man ill! . . . Man ill! . . . Man ill! . . ."

Others came, and they all shouted together, but no answer was returned. The naked men clambered, shivering, one after another up to the window and looked out into the night. No answer. The little town was sleeping its drowsy country sleep. Only . . . from the room . . . there was a gurgling monotone like water boiling in a copper.

"'E's got the rattles. . . . 'E's dying—that's wot he is," said one man. The others looked at each other, awe-stricken.

"Man dying!" shouted one of them. "Can't you 'ear?"

"Oh, don't say I'm dying!" moaned Willie. "Mother! Mother! Mother!"

"Don't call any more," said the tramp. "It's 'urting 'im. Let's try an' think of somethink else."

At that moment the door unlocked and the porter appeared.

"What's the meaning of all this row?" he demanded.

The tramp jerked a finger at Willie.

"Look," he said.

The porter made a hasty examination, and ran out for the master. They returned together. The body was taken into another ward, and Willie's tramp was motioned to follow.

"You knew this man?" said the master.

"Yes," retorted the tramp, "and when I came in, wot did I say? Didn't I say, 'send for the doctor?' They all 'eard me say it."

"Poor fellow!" said the master.

"Poor feller!" sneered the tramp. "Culpable negligence—that's wot it is."

"Tell the others they may go in the morning. It doesn't matter about their tasks," replied the master, taking no notice.

"It's a shame—that's wot it is," said the tramp, turning to go.

When he got to the door, he faced the master, his features hideous with passion. "Damn you to hell!" he cried. "You dirty dog! . . . Damn you to hell and back again! . . . He was only a poor softy. . . . You . . . you bloody swine!"

---

The next morning a file of casuals dribbled out from the entrance gate, and took their roads, north, south, east, and west. No one remained to bear witness . . . no evidence was left. . . .

Only one consumptive-looking wayfarer turned to another and said: "'E wanted wood, didn't 'e? Now 'e's got it."

# "Leave them 'orses alone!"

By the Editor

THE Irish question may at last be said to have reached a practical stage. With a hundred thousand men marshalled under Sir Edward Carson—presumably staunch, sturdy fellows, some of whom are, no doubt, versed in the use of the modern rifle—the political problem of Home Rule assumes an intelligible and tangible aspect. Rebellion being High Treason to the King and to the State, and this array of civic soldiery being obviously rebellion, it follows logically enough that the Government has every right to summon them to disband, and in the event of their refusal, unmercifully to shoot them down. Cromwell would probably have done it while the Ulstermen's leader was away holiday-making at the baths. Napoleon, of course, would have delighted in doing it. And so would Peter the Great, Frederick, or any of our own Tudor family. There is a great deal to be said in favour of such an attitude from the point of view of authority and discipline; moreover, for the time being we should have solved that other Imperial problem—what to do with our own Lord Kitchener.

---

We could try the new military airship service; try the new uniforms, sashes, buttons, "paper" boots, and weevil biscuits incidental to campaigns; use the big guns of the newest ships; turn on the Solent's motor fleet boats; emulate, in short, the stirring Christianity of the Balkan States, kill, ravish, maim, crucify, and keelhaul enough rebels to satisfy even the bloodiest of Boy Scouts and the "cold steel" brigade generally. It would be English—very: Christian—obviously: historical—without question. Precedent entirely supports it; is not our whole Constitution built up on precedent? It would be a gallant time for the Army, for privateersmen, oafs, wastrels, cadgers, heroes, rankers, and "Charlies" of all descriptions. At home in London we could spend long mornings reading pages of

newspaper reports about the stupendous charges, assaults, battles, victories, and blood-baths, and the forlorn hopes led by our fashionable polo players: there would be a special golfers' regiment, a footballers' regiment (Rugby men, of course, as the others would be more lucratively employed), a smart society brigade, probably an actors', a City, a journalists', a curlers', a German waiters', a Macaroni, a Peter Pan, a doctors', a youngest sons', and even an unmarried daughters', volunteer contingent, in short, good sport going generally for all and sundry, kit and grog provided by the War Office.

---

The prospect is alluring. Winter is coming on, when men are apt to fall out of employment. We should be in good practice after our season on the moors. Colonel Seely, as we know, is always putting out in lifeboats, as if he wanted to save something; he probably is thirsting for the job. A dashing Irish Regiment, hitherto quartered at Guernsey, has been studiously shooting every morning all these days across the only golf links on the island, thus seriously interfering with the golfers' progress, and evidently with a view to hitting something; and they are returning to Ireland this month. There are lots of names to avenge—Cavendish, Parnell, Wilfred Blunt, and George Moore, who "had to leave his country." Moreover, as Irishmen are proverbially bellicose and intractable, there would probably be some fun even here. All Irishmen worthy of the name would certainly take the first Fishguard train for the scene of hostilities and thereby bankrupt the Tory Press. "Tally-ho!" always appeals to Englishmen. There would be a hunt, a hue and cry, fifty thousand Boy Scouts on the scent with women's bags, detonators, shepherds' crooks, fog signals, Gamage torpedoes, squibs, dynamite, radium, and castor oil. Irish would meet Irish in the Strand, in the Empire Lounge, in Fleet Street, even at Whitehall, and there would be more fun, more chivying. We English could hamstring all the Irish hunters in the country, kiss all the violet eyes we saw in Merry England, burn all the old Protestant Irishmen and market-garden women we found for witches in Leicester Square, wrestle with all the annoying Irish problems and person-

alities that so constantly baffle us all over this Island; in short, make sure of the business this time, brogue, blarney, Shaw, Yeats, Londonderry, Phœnix Park, and the entire Ulster buffoonery with sixteen inches of Sheffield steel down the Irish gizzard of each one of them.

---

We don't like the Irish, any more than we like anybody, whether Scottish, Welsh, American, Jewish, German, French, or Parsee. They are a perpetual intrusion and nuisance here, with their little Irish players teaching us how to act, their literary whimsicality, nebulosity and verbosity, their infernal talk, humour, political intrigue, plot and paradox, nor have any of them done much for England except lead the British Army to victory on various occasions; as for the "moonlighters," the whiskey, the wakes, the kissing-stones, and all the other rubbish and tweedle-dum of Erin mystification—the sooner all this gets gathered up into the sane and exhilarating crucible of our Five Towns, the better it will be for the Germans—when they come. Not a doubt of it. It's a damp climate. The people live in mud huts in order the better to throw stones. Bog, peat, talk and sacerdotalism—all the best of them go to America or come over here to speed up English politics or write pseudo-Pagan books. A truant, moody, brooding, vindictive folk! They are fond of fighting—let them fight. It is no concern of ours. Some good is sure to come out of it, as we recently saw in the Balkan imbroglio, if only the truth about the Crown Jewels. We have done our best, anyhow. If the Irish won't swallow their shamrock, let them have hemlock. What was good enough for Socrates should be good enough for "Pat."

---

Sir Edward Carson could be immediately arraigned for High Treason, and sent to be dealt with by Mr. Justice Darling. That is how the Russians, who have vast experience in these little risings and revolutions, invariably begin operations. Next, a strong man would be sent to Dublin, and in his wake there would follow an army of detectives, secret and provocative agents, and all such who would play informer. Then come the guns, the ammunition, the Horse-guards, and the men. The rebel leaders are sorted out, segregated, shadowed, and finally arrested and thrown

into the the many wishing-wells so conveniently abundant in the country. All weapons are seized on a methodical system of domiciliary visits, searches and inquisitions. Here and there, a truculent Irishman is shot, knocked on the head, or removed—quietly. When the men no longer have any weapons, resistance is difficult. Besides, it is dangerous. After one or two street disturbances, things in such circumstances have a wonderful way of settling themselves. Break a few men's backs and many a movement is broken. And so it would be with Ulster, if the Government acted as Governments are supposed to act, and as this Government will find itself compelled to act should the hundred thousand men begin to shoot and Mr. Birrell receive a leaden pellet in place of a new *obiter dictum*.

---

I was thinking of the gravity of this the other day on my way to Southampton, when a little Irishman, very drunk, was thrust into the carriage by the guard and upbraided for not having a ticket. "Where's your money then?" No answer. "Now then, none of your Irish games here, ticket or money, or out you go." But all the little Irishman did was to grunt: "Ain't got no money, nor no ticket," which said, he collapsed in the corner of the seat. At three stations in succession this performance was repeated, the guards and ticket-collectors evidently knowing their man, who was travelling back with some horses, and each time the questioning and cross-questioning was resumed, and always without success, for as the train went off the little fellow still sat in his corner opposite to me, blinking and muttering to himself.

---

At last I intervened. "It's no good bullying him," I said. "No doubt, he's a good Home Ruler." But at this the little ostler chap winked and brightened up remarkably. "I'm not a b—— Home Ruler," he said, "ain't got no money, nor no ticket." "You see," said the ticket-collector, "that's what he always does, always drunk, in charge of them 'orses too, and never takes no ticket nor has a penny on him. We're about fed up with him, we are."

"You're a Protestant, then," I said, trying to ease the tension, and again my fellow-traveller brightened up. "I

ain't no b—— Protestant," he said, "ain't got no money, nor no ticket."

"What are you then, a Catholic?" shouted the guard.

"I ain't a b—— Catholic," growled back the Irishman, "ain't got no money, nor no ticket, and you leave them 'orses alone."

We were getting on.

"Look here," I said, "you must be a Protestant or a Home Ruler. Which are you?"

This time the drunken man looked at me attentively. "I ain't no b—— nothing," he retorted, "I don't want to be nothing. You let them 'orses alone. I ain't got no money, nor no ticket. And I'm goin' 'ome."

"Told you so," said the guard, as if proud of his *protégé*. "This little devil travels all over the place like that, never pays for anything. We knows him well, and his boss. Always drunk. Not a Home Ruler either. 'Ain't got no money,' that's all he says. 'Leave them 'orses alone.' I'd like to punch his little jaw off!"

---

Again we were off, and once more we stopped, when a fresh body of ticket-collectors, evidently apprised of their trophy, appeared at the door.

"Where's our little friend, eh? Ah, out you come. This is your change here. Out of it," one of them shouted, while another stepped into the carriage, worried and shoved the little Irishman out on to the platform.

"Show me your ticket."

The little fellow backed himself up against the wall, and made a queer figure, lolling up and down, like a dancer.

"Now then. Where's your money? You can't travel free, you know."

No use. The Irishman put his hands in his trouser pockets, stuck up his little chin, and stared ruminatively.

The ticket-collectors shouted, shook him, cursed him, but he took not the slightest notice. Just before the train started I leant out of window and called to him:

"Good whiskey, Pat, eh?" and at the words a great change came over his features, which spread out into a pleasing grin. As the train moved on, he put two fingers deftly into his waistcoat pocket, and pulled out a gold coin, holding it up to me all of a twinkle under the gas-light

in the palm of the left hand, and they were on him—No, "ain't got no money," I heard him saying, "nor no ticket. You leave them 'orses . . ."

---

He got back home all right, I feel sure, with his horses and his gold, despite the guards and ticket-collectors, and no doubt enjoyed himself immensely in the old country. "You leave them 'orses alone." That was very clever of him. It identified his calling, invested him with the immunity which is the privilege of drunkenness, and so got him through. Neither a Protestant, nor a Home Ruler! Just a human being, an Irishman, a jolly ostler who did not want to be anything political, social, ethical, philosophic or up-to-date. And all the time in the intervals of the bully-ragging by the officials at the various stoppages, he would place one foot after another on the seat, take out a button-hook, and deliberately fasten the top button on each of his gaiters, and then immediately afterwards solemnly undo them, after a few minutes' contemplation beginning the operation over again. He must have done that seventy times between the stations, and, watching the performance with breathless interest, I began to feel more and more that it was symbolic, like a statue by Rodin.

---

What is the good of anything? You offer the Irish Home Rule, the North proceeds to arm. You refuse Ireland self-government, and you are threatened with a Catholic rising in the South. The little Irishman grew upon me. Here were the fussy guards and ticket-collectors bothering the poor little fellow for his ticket when they knew all the time that he had not got one, and never did have one, such being his way of travel through the world. I tried to make him out a Catholic or a Home Ruler, actually taking part in the plaguing of him for no better reason than that I felt he ought to be something, as in this part of the world we feel we do like to be something or other mock-heroic and important, but the little chap got the better of all of us. At heart, no doubt, he was a ferocious Ulsterman, or a Parnellite, possibly even a priest. It was no business of mine to question him because he was drunk. A man may still get drunk in capitalistic England. Even "blind," he was a match for us. We got nothing out of him whatever.

Why try to? His horses were safely looked after by Englishmen in the van. Perhaps he was sea-sick! Perhaps he wasn't. It doesn't matter. What does seem to matter is the lesson he offered in what one may call statesmanship.

---

How are we going to deal with Sir Edward Carson and his hundred thousand Ulstermen? The historical and customary way is, as before said, to meet force with force and lay about the rebels with stock-ends and bludgeons—a course which would be perfectly justified, righteous, and exemplary. Belfast, for example, is the town which deliberately turned out all of Nietzsche's works from the public library on the ground that they were immoral. Such a city could well be fumigated, decimated, or purged in the interests of progress and culture. Destruction, however, is not always the best remedy. And the moment it comes to destruction, the more ridiculous, impolitic, and criminal does any such procedure appear.

---

Nobody at this time of day could seriously desire to stir up a religious war; yet such would inevitably be the case in the event of bloodshed in Ulster, and for a Protestant country to connive at such a work would positively be an act of lunacy. For an English political party, again, to force Home Rule upon a country in opposition to its most important section is obviously an arbitrary act which, lacking all national reason of necessity or military exigency, seems to be as uncalled for as it is unjustifiable. At the same time, something must be done. That is admitted. If the English have to look after the "'orses" which the Irishman is in charge of, it is at least due to the Englishman that their services should be respected, and, to some extent at any rate, that their counsels in the interests of law and order should be tolerated and attended to. If, on the other hand, enforcement of a measure is destined to plunge a part of our own people in religious internecine warfare, why surely there can be no reason cogent enough to justify such coercion which would be a remedy infinitely more harmful than the disease.

---

The Prussians have tried it, and failed dismally and signally. So far as the Germanisation of Poland is con-

cerned, no progress can be reported whatever. It fails because of language and the women—the two great powers in the nationality of a people. To attempt to coerce Ulster against the will of the people would be to set up another Irish problem in place of the old one. Short of letting the Irish fight it out for themselves, such a policy must inevitably fail. Neither nationally nor internationally is there a Home Rule question for us, such as, for instance, existed in Scandinavia. It is merely a matter of domestic politics, which is not now an English question, or even one which troubles the individual Englishman in the slightest. On principle, it would seem sound enough that the Irish should have complete autonomy, as Bavaria has, or Würtemberg—an arrangement which, in the case of the German Empire, answers admirably. It is not the duty of Englishmen, however, to insist upon such a policy at the point of the bayonet if an important part of Ireland is passionately opposed to it. To allow Irish to fight Irish for such a cause would be the complete negation of statesmanship.

---

What is needed now is clearly a round table gathering of the wise men for and against. The Irish question is not a matter of pride or opportunism, but of political sense. For Liberalism to attempt to treat the matter as a Party principle would be a political mistake of the gravest kind. The object of Home Rule is not to "dish" Ulster or to reward Mr. Redmond, but to establish the permanent foundations of civic order and prosperity in Ireland, and for such an ideal all Party political considerations should be bravely sacrificed. No matter what the Welsh may say, the Irish question must be treated exclusively on its Irish merits and demerits, and not as a Party question at all. As a fact, in this country it has virtually ceased to have any such significance.

---

Plainly, it is the duty of politicians to see this question on the high plane of constructive statecraft. As a political force question it is, of course, infantile. The civilian army of Sir Edward Carson could be destroyed easily and swiftly if necessary, but the point is that it is not necessary. The Ulsterman all know that. A pitched battle between

the nondescript Carson Army and regulars would be as ludicrous as Don Quixote's charge upon the windmill. It is whispered abroad that though Sir Edward talks big like a Suffragette, his judicial soul is bent on compromise, and probably the whisper is correct. The whole arming of Ulster is a gigantic political bluff which need not be taken too seriously. At the same time, the Irish are natural fighters; the pantomime could easily become a drama; the drama might easily become a tragedy? *Cui bono?* Would Generalissimo Carson lead the last charge? Would Captain F. E. Smith die in the trenches? Would the Irish Peers put forth in airships to drop bombs upon the War Lords at Downing Street? "Ain't got no money. Leave them 'orses alone." But my drunken little fellow-passenger might fall with a dum-dum in his windpipe. A lot of fine honest fellows might lose their lives in a senseless and needless fray. Death is a responsible affair to a people; they don't like it. It isn't worth the gunpowder, even as a political plank.

---

There is never any kudos in forcible disciplinary measures; there will be none in coercing Ulster. Sir Edward Carson has made a valiant name for himself—he is entitled to his reward. Let him have it, feathers, paint, finery, with all the Chock-taw scalps and beads appurtenant to his pyrotechnics. It would be easy to shoot him and have done with this Ulster braggadocio, but it will be far more dignified and profitable to treat with him. After all, he is an honourable man, as they in Ulster and we ourselves are all honourable men. The thing is to get this problem solved, not to unloosen it for another; for that some mediatory scheme can be contrived, that some solution satisfactory to both North and South can be arrived at, is surely not beyond the means of honest co-operation and compromise.

---

We are face to face here with a question which, as a test of English political sanity, is of world-wide interest. If Conservatism, fighting in reality for its own interests, Party economic and social, deliberately forces this question of Irish government into a fighting issue, it must be

made to accept full responsibility. That will not be the fault of Liberalism. But the Tories must now be given every chance to display their native genius of political common sense. They must be invited openly and honestly to assist Liberalism to find a solution. All attempts to force Liberalism to the country must be met by Liberalism with a stern refusal, because any such weakness would be subversive to the whole spirit of popular and constitutional Government. It would be a blunder of the gravest kind for Tory politicians to imagine that they can carry this question by force, in the first place, because they do not possess the force, either the authority or the men, and in the second, because to establish the precedent of a Party question in this country overruled by violence would not only destroy the machinery of government, but must constitutionally involve the very position of the Crown, which stands by virtue of consent.

---

Very much the same position arose over the House of Lords, when the "Die-hards" and other vociferous spirits spoke of fighting to the death in the ditches. What happened is now history. In opposition to the will of the people, they were constitutionally in opposition to their King. When the time came to die, all the Bishops and most of the Peers realised the delicacy of the situation with the grace peculiar to their caste, and, as we may remember, beyond a little noise, the Peers took their beating like men. They are in very similar case with Ulster. Bloodshed in Ireland would directly implicate the authority of the King. It would open the floodgates of violence, disorder, and anarchy in all spheres of political, economic, and social life; for obviously what is permitted to Ulster is equally permissible in Middlesex. We stand indeed before another constitutional crisis. If the Conservatives are ill-advised enough to refuse to compromise or enter into honest negotiations, resolved at all costs to make Ireland the cockpit for turning the Liberals out, they will make an even greater mistake than in their futile opposition to the reform of the Upper Chamber. Let there be real fighting in Ireland, and the Conservatives will discover forces in political life few men among them ever dreamt of—forces which will prove destructive to the Party life of this country.

Every step in the decline of Conservative power and privilege is a step in the decline of the Throne, which rules by the consent of both Parties. The King cannot take sides. The further the powers of Conservatism and Liberalism fall asunder, the weaker the position of the Crown grows. In the present case, to refuse to enter loyally into a Conference on the Irish question would sound the knell of old-time Conservative power in this country. It is for Conservatism to choose. The Government will welcome without a doubt any loyal form of co-operation in a problem which has been the bane of our political life for centuries. In the judgment of most men, there is no case for bloodshed. Liberalism has its mandate and cannot now retract; the need is of a Round Table. The question is poised awaiting solution. There must be a compromise or a General Election. The time has come for the splendid sanity of England to assert itself. It will. And it says now to the politicians on both sides—"Chuck it! Meet together and settle this question like business men." As for the cavalry and all that silliness, Begorra! Our lawyer politicians had better try to hoist Mr. Ouimet and "leave them 'orses alone."

# Androcles *v.* ("Oh! I Say!") Potiphar

THE autumn season has begun strepitantly—with the "booing" of a play by Sir J. M. Barrie. Then Bernard Shaw's Megaera has been utterly misunderstood, and Sir Herbert has surpassed himself as the "grand old man" of all the Israelites, knocking down with one stroke of his Rip-van-Winkle beard the most cherished ban of English censorship. Gaby Deslys has come back. Jack Johnson—enough; black is the reigning colour on the stage to-day, and here we are again, making (according to the Psalms) "a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob."

*Androcles and the Lion* and *Joseph and his Brethren* are symptomatic, and they are as opposite as Cain and Abel. Shaw's play is very serious and didactic, whereas at his Majesty's all is opera-glass and theatricality for an auditorium wrapt in the darkness of eternity, so that "the Gods" can applaud their Joseph and his posse of beautiful Jewesses, and Potiphar's wife with her Parisian spangled skirt and her black hair hanging down her back, and little Benjamin, and the sons of Bilbah and of Zilpath, of Leah and of Rachel, and the shrieks which "Straussify" the gouging out of Potiphar's eyes, and the mid-Victorian really sweetly pretty love scene between Joseph and Asenath, daughter of Menthu, and the special introductory choruses of sacred music which prelude each scene, all this and much more, including a real camel and many calves, and the alleged Penetention Hymn composed by King David, as were it a grand show at Olympia or the latest autumn surprise at Drury Lane. A splendiferous Uranian production. The "electric," in short, superimposed on real people; effect, that is, without the tiresome causes of dramaturgy, optics in place of drama, real, live actors glittering with the emanations of the kinema.

It is better to see Joseph first, because there is no band

at *Androcles*, and the gambols of (Mr. Silward's) Lion call for some serious reflection, besides which there is some very pungent wit and frolic between the Romans and the Christians, so that if there is more nakedness there than at His Majesty's, there is, on the other hand, more stuff in the manner of words, which on the stage are, as we know, a nuisance.

But nobody need be afraid. Bernard Shaw is an anti-vivisectionist. Not even a dromedary is eaten alive-o; besides, Retiarius is a puny fellow. Quite early, the Lion and Androcles present a song and dance in a wood of multicoloured ribbons, conceived (I fancy) by Mr. A. Rothenstein, and a bully dance it is, placing us at ease with ourselves, for it is an early Christian conception of the Turkey-Trot. Poor Lion! His paw hurts him dreadfully, the more Megaera scolds and storms, the more ruthful friend Leo looks.

The British Lion? Of course. This is Mr. Shaw's joke. Megaera, why sure, she is the conventional shrew who doesn't want a vote, the eternal feminine of the books. Our doubts were quickened to a certainty when the Christian captives trooped in: one Lavinia, beautiful and chaste as snow, who thinks of death in the arena as quite natural and easy for a cause and a principle; the giant, Ferrovius, with his muscles and his martial temperament, whose chief glory lies in battle and victory; and the rest of the Christians, with their proud convictions and humilities, marching to death and immortality.

When the Roman dandy chucks Lavinia under the chin, she does not giggle like the gentlefolk in the audience, she just rebukes him with the dignity of a Queen Elizabeth, so that the poor boy is ashamed of his anachronistic manhood. When the Emperor spies the muscles of the Christian Ferrovius and sees how, single-handed, he slays six armed gladiators in the ring, without even an asinine jawbone, he is delighted and appoints him a captain of the Pretorian Guards. When Androcles, who is a modern husband, serenely calm and patient, philosophical and guileless, extracts the thorn from Leo's paw, the plot thickens at once into a Pankhurstian razzia. The "purple-panoplied" Emperor, the Guards and his gladiators, and the nigger with the fine torso fly here and there before the

Lion and his roar, but Lavinia only smiles and strokes his tawny mane. It is a Christian triumph from first to last, the triumph of supernal femininity—emancipated woman. The early Christians are only the puppets of Mr. Shaw's pleasantry. Our "new" woman wins. It is a feminist play, a homily, the common-sense philosophy of "votes for women."

Very pretty, great fun, a delightful entertainment, and charmingly staged and acted. Mr. Shaw is the Balfour of drama. He has a half-sheet of wisdom for both sides. The Roman Captain, on whose mailed breast Lavinia subsequently falls, is a manly, sensible fellow, and no doubt in time she will convert him, and the baby. Even the Menagerie Keeper has human doubts and weaknesses; as for the Emperor, he is not half a bad sort really; we can meet his like any day on the front bench at Westminster. Androcles is probably Mr. Shaw himself, and right glad we are to see him amble off joyously with the Lion—the British Lion, who never, never shall be a slave to himself or anybody else. One of Shaw's pleasant plays, curiously clever in its adroitness of dramatic effect, despite a buffoonery which might easily enough topple over into tragedy.

*Androcles* has the happy lightness of *Cleopatra*, the opening scene of which is one of the best things in modern drama. Its humour is serene and kindly, then the individual characterisation is more careful than usual, more *rangé*, as the French might say. It is the exact opposite to the spectacularisation of Joseph at His Majesty's, as Mr. Granville Barker is the antipode in scenic production to Mr. Louis N. Parker. Here we have, at any rate, two generous productions, and, if extremes meet, it should be well with them. British prejudice has once more been overcome. I fear me much that we shall now have a series of panoramic Biblical episodes on the stage with ribston-pippins and a Hagenbeck python in the Garden. At any rate, that won't be Shaw's fault. He doesn't gorge his lion, as they gorge us at His Majesty's, and he lets us out in plenty of time for supper. Show *aut* Shaw? Or, let us say, Beauty or the Beast. The young will probably go to the performing animal play, the old to see Potiphar's wife. Who would have thought it? Joseph and Androcles—

London's latest postcard heroes! And both Potiphar's wife and Mégaera put to shame. Well, well!—

"Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate." —Ps. xxxiv.

I read that in the supplementary programme at His Majesty's. I hope it may be so. But I do think that Potiphar's wife ought to be provided with a Reinhardt platform to appear among the audience, for her diamonds are beautiful, and so is she. At the Kingsway Opera House, now, they would have thought of that.

S. O.

# Books of the Month

## BIOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

LIFE OF DAVID LLOYD GEORGE. By HERBERT DU PARCQ. Caxton Publishing Co.

There are especial reasons why a life of Mr. Lloyd George, written with discrimination and insight, should at the present juncture be of more than usual interest. We stand as yet too close to the revolution of 1906 to be able to appreciate its full significance, but that that epoch marks the inauguration of a more vital democratic phase than has been opened up in history is already evident. The outcome of that phase, the capacity of the new movement, and the ideals it will pursue are the great problems of contemporary history. They are of doubtful issue because the impulses of a Democracy are themselves doubtful; but of one thing we may be certain, and that is that the ability of the new governing force to achieve anything coherent, constructive, and permanent will depend largely on the character of those whom it selects as leaders. This is the nature of the interest which attaches to Mr. Lloyd George. He, and he alone, represents 1906. All the other members of our Government, remarkable as several of them are for high abilities and gifts of character, yet stand for forces which are familiar to our politics. We know the ideas in which they traffic and the ports they steer to. Only in one of their number are the uncertainties and possibilities, the vague hopes and vague aspirations of the modern democratic movement incarnated. That movement, by the sheer weight of its own momentum, has carried its representative onward to place and power. Mr. Lloyd George's strength is the strength of modern Democracy. On the other hand, the chances of modern Democracy of pursuing ends worthy to be called national will, for this generation at least, probably depend in chief part on the personal character and abilities of Mr. Lloyd George. So that really, in endeavouring to probe that character and measure those abilities, we are less concerned with individual analysis than with the chances of development of the democratic cause in England. We need only add that Mr. du Parcq's biography is, in this quest for enlightenment, of the greatest assistance. The condition of such a "life" being useful is, as we said to begin with, that it should be written with discrimination and insight. The present work is so written. The author unites gifts not often found in combination. A sincere Liberal, he is in perfect intellectual agreement with the subject of his book, but his judgment is so calm and impartial that he never wearies with indiscriminate praise, and his very commendation is so worded as to have the air of criticism. The book, moreover, is so well written that it is sure to please any, if any such there be, with whom literary excellence counts for more than political prejudice. For our part we derive from these pages matter for a profound hopefulness. Realising that, for our lifetime at least, Democracy stands or falls with Mr. Lloyd George, we have a quiet confidence none the less in the democratic outlook.

AN IRISH GENTLEMAN: GEORGE HENRY MOORE. HIS TRAVEL, HIS RACING, HIS POLITICS. By COLONEL MAURICE GEORGE MOORE, C.B. With a Preface by GEORGE MOORE. 16s. net.

"Why not write a book? Here are ample materials; it will amuse you, I am sure." With these words the wife of George Henry Moore laid before her husband the neat parcels of letters which he had written to his mother from the East. So far from attaining her end, that of seducing

him from the attractions of horse-racing, Mrs. Moore was instrumental in destroying what must have proved an incomparable book of memoirs. For Moore "took the letters and put them, packet by packet, on the fire, saying he wished never to see them again." Happily his son has succeeded in recovering from an old lumber room papers sufficient to give a taste of the wit, vivacity, and zestfulness of this remarkable man. And if we agree with the Colonel's brother, Mr. George Moore, that his father was "as good a subject for biography as ever came to a man's hand" because he really was "rather shocking," besides being "a man of courage, of action, of impulse, in no sense of the word a Parliamentarian," nevertheless we do not share his regrets that his brother should have "devoted so many pages to the Tenants Right Bill and the Ecclesiastical Tithes Bill." On the contrary, what we find so interesting in the life of George Henry Moore is just this very fact: that a man who lived so zestfully, who erred so humanly, who pursued pleasure so devotedly—anything but a "Parliamentarian"—should, nevertheless, have been so effective in Parliament, and have done more for the Independent Irish Party than any of the conventional party politicians. We watch him as a young man determinedly wasting his time, if not, as his too fond mother persuaded herself that he was doing, going to the devil; falling in love with an undesirable lady, and flying from her to Eastern lands, only to be followed and made melancholy by the reckless object of his affections; hobnobbing with Sheikhs and learned Mohammedan Kadis, who acknowledged sin as they pledged him deeply in strong drink; sketching Sabkah, a dusky beauty who danced for him, and engaging in tender conversations with the Russian Count's daughter; returning home to become noted for his cross-country riding in Ireland and for the horses he kept; winning the Chester Cup, and proving to his mother that racehorses are the "best investment going." And in the second phase of his career we see this rakish, devil-may-care sportsman profoundly moved by the horrors of the Irish famine, organising relief, spending his fortune in charity, and entering politics determined to call attention to Irish affairs. At first he stood alone among the Irish members. He had no sympathy with those who proved to be always at the beck and call of the English party whips, nor was he at this time in favour of a Repeal of the Act of Union. But he was largely instrumental in creating the Independent Irish Party which was to throw its weight into the scales against any Government which neglected Ireland. For sheer charm and delight, the earlier part of this biography has the greater interest. But we would not sacrifice any pages from the later narrative, which is not only important as a chapter in Irish political history, but puts the whole psychology of this fascinating person on a higher level of interest.

## ESSAYS AND GENERAL LITERATURE

THE ENGLISH NOVEL. By PROFESSOR SAINTSBURY. Dent. 5s. net.

This volume admirably represents the wide learning and deep research of its author. From Beowulf to Meredith, Professor Saintsbury has traced the course of the English novel from its primitive, romantic germ with a mastery that could hardly be excelled. Between the great landmarks the Professor has often to traverse dull and dusty tracts, and some readers will doubtless refuse to follow him. Yet he cannot be called a dull guide. Frequent flashes of boisterous if clumsy merriment illumine his learning and cheer the despondent student. His style, rough and at times reckless, reflects a warm-hearted zest in the pursuit of letters. He knows his authors so well that he can take liberties with them. He can laugh at them or with them without restraint.

He gives an excellent account of Malory, Bunyan, and Defoe, and is at his best when dealing with Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne. He is just to many luckless obscure authors, rightly observing that what is hackneyed now was original once. He is always fair-minded, though

we may not agree with some of his verdicts. He pronounces *Yeast* and *Alton Locke* to be novels "full of genius," and unduly extols *Westward Ho!*

He places Meredith above Balzac, though he is keenly alive to the absurdities of the Meredithian style. He declares that Miss Burney "never wrote really well," though he does justice to her lifelike portraits in *Evelina*. *Rasselas*, he says, is Johnson's greatest book, refusing that honour to *The Lives of the Poets* with the quibble that it is "only a bundle of essays." Compared with his eulogy of Charles Kingsley, his praises of Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot sound cold and meagre. With the last-named he has obviously little sympathy. He affirms that in the "satiric fantastic tale" Anthony Hamilton is "the superior of Voltaire himself and the master of everybody." If the Professor is taken seriously there should be a run on Anthony Hamilton's *Contes*. Yet when all deductions are made, this book by Professor Saintsbury remains a fine contribution to a useful series.

QUINTESSENCE OF IBSENISM. By BERNARD SHAW. Constable. 3*s*. 6*d*.

What Mr. Bernard Shaw said many years ago about Ibsen is now republished, as he tells us, undiluted in this reprint with some additional chapters, forming as a whole an extremely neat and lucid statement of what one may call the Ibsen case or formula. Of course, there is no case or formula, as Mr. Shaw gradually through the mist of fun and gravity explains to us. His new chapter on the technical novelty of Ibsen's drama is extremely interesting as a critical study, and explains Shaw's attacks on Shakespeare and the old "hats" of the stage, as surely as the madness of Hamlet explains his method. Discussion was Ibsen's new dramatic weapon in the place of action, whether tragic or comic. This book should certainly be read, if only for Mr. Shaw's very valuable contribution towards this subject, not yet accepted or even understood by a great many modern critics of the drama.

## FICTION

THE OLD TIME BEFORE THEM. By EDEN PHILLPOTTS. John Murray. 6*s*.

This book is a collection of fifteen short stories told to us by Tom Turtle, who gathered them at the bar of "The Plume of Feathers" in Widecombe. The tales are rich in humour and racy in dialect. They reflect the warmth of an inn, the jests and sorrows of a countryside. Mr. Eden Phillpotts knows his characters, and portrays them with a sure and genial strength. There is no straining after effect, no touch of melodrama. The interest is always quietly human, and even the few descriptions of Nature are the cunning reflection of some rustic mind. There are many shrewd sayings scattered through these pleasant tales and much sound philosophy. On the whole, the patrons of "The Plume" were a cheerful set—men who liked good ale and cider as well as a good story. Mr. Eden Phillpotts describes many types with admirable sincerity. He tells us of brave women like Sally Campion, of brave men like Mark Mumford, of folk "market merry," and of "hookem snivey" rogues. Perhaps the best of these stories are "For Valour," "A Bargain's a Bargain," "The Fur-lined Coat," "The Rope," "The Mystery of the Sailor Men," and "White Heather," which contains an exquisite description of the Dart at Swincombe Firs. But it is difficult to make a selection. Occasionally a fastidious critic may detect a lapse into literary language on the part of this Widecombe folk, but even here Mr. Eden Phillpotts may be right. Nowadays even the remote villager, thanks to the daily Press, has his journalistic moments. The stories can hardly be called finely chiselled. They are simple and rough, as if they grew out of the genial loquacity of the frequenters of "The Plume." Some of them depend for their interest on flashes of dialect that light up odd bits of character, rather than on any plot or episode.

RAINBOW LIGHTS. Edited by A. DE SILVA. Duckworth. 6*s*.

In a series of vignette studies of the American women, the author has contrived a book which stands out quite remarkably for its sense of observation and judgment and sharp literary delineation—whether a man or woman it is difficult to say. The writer certainly knows the types of Americans, and deals especially with the asexual or modern unsexed American woman to be met with on the big liners, who seems to live in a whirl of giddy vapidity and uselessness. They are real studies, and the book is worth many a long and detailed *opus* on American life and its institutions.

SINISTER STREET. By COMPTON MACKENZIE. Vol. I. Martin Secker. 6*s*.

It may be that the dread prospect of the return of the three, four, or five-volume novel determined the Library Censors to put their ban on this book. When novels so popular as Mr. Bennett's run into trilogies, when even translations from French books such as *Jean Christophe* are published in England tetralogically, Messrs. Smith, Mudie and Co. may well have paused before committing themselves to the two-volume immensity of Mr. Mackenzie's new enterprise. But these censors, whose self-ordained function it is to preserve the ignorance of youth, have sufficient reason for banning this book if discussion of sex and sexuality is a crime. Any open-minded reader of his novel will be convinced that Mr. Mackenzie is attempting in a sincere and philosophic spirit to consider the supremely important effects upon character of the awakening of the sex impulse in youth. This is very far from being the whole of his theme. This influence is one among several supreme influences which he notes and analyses. But it is a fact that he does give it a preponderance such as has probably never been assigned to it before in an English novel.

We welcome it as a sincere attempt to grapple with an important problem which not only every schoolmaster constantly discusses, but which every headmaster in orders constantly preaches about in chapel before the whole of his school. Mr. Mackenzie, happily, does not preach, for it is the business of a novelist not to preach, but to present, and to allow readers to come to any conclusion, didactic or otherwise, according to their fancy. What we are concerned with—being convinced that Mr. Mackenzie has no *arrière pensée*—is his truth to life and character. He is addressing himself to a task similar to that of Rolland in *Jean Christophe*, and showing us the evolution of a boy who in the next volume is to become a man—a boy sensitive yet masculine, impressionable yet active, ardent yet philosophic and brilliant—in a certain sense a type, and in another sense a super-man, or rather super-boy. Michael Hishers, is the son of a Mrs. Fane, not married to that dimly shadowed father, the Earl of Saxby. Michael and his sister Stella are the love-products of this unrecognised union, and both of them set out upon their exceptional yet representative careers. We find it hard to be convinced by the psychology of Michael the baby and small boy. Mr. Mackenzie probably resembles the rest of us in forgetting his own impressions at the age of two, and in attempting to reconstruct the infantile phantasms of reality he is no more successful than he was in *Carnival*, or than M. Rolland was in *Jean Christophe*. But no sooner has his hero gone to school than he begins to live for us as well as for himself. This "sinister" picture of the foolish satire of masters, the fashions and aspirations of small boys, the keen zest for work and games, and weariness of them, the vast, absorbing, and sometimes hated institutional atmosphere of the school, is a more faithful picture of public-school life than anything we know in English fiction. Where Mr. Mackenzie perhaps errs is in the emphasis he gives to certain exceptional influences in the life of his hero. Nearly all schoolboys are extraordinarily sentimental and extraordinarily religious. But Michael is a theologian. Many clever schoolboys are in danger of becoming æsthetes, whether it be of the George Moore or the Oscar Wilde type; but Michael outdoes them all. Nearly all of them are addicted to love affairs and take an interest in questions of sex; but Michael is, more than most boys,

exposed to the violent surprises of knowledge. But if Mr. Mackenzie attends to this question very closely, and actually gives it a greater importance than it seems to merit, that is because he is attending very closely to all the remarkable influences which may be exerted upon an impressionable and exceptional boy. We think that he has, considering his whole scheme, attempted a task which is rather too large for his philosophy. But his characters are alive. The school is a veritable hive of bees and drones; we recognise it as a characteristic forcing ground of youth. Undoubtedly Mr. Mackenzie has written a powerful and zestful book, which the censor has advertised to the advantage of those whom he has introduced to it.

THE IDIOT. By FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY. Translated by CONSTANCE GARNETT. 620 pp. Heinemann. 3*s*. 6*d*. net.

*The Idiot* is the most typical of all Dostoevsky's novels. It was his own favourite, and into it he poured the very essence of his cryptic, sombre, and merciful philosophy. It is a book of immense length, crowded with characters and melodramatic scenes, and it is enveloped in a kind of atmospheric incoherence which suggests the abnormal. It is one of the extraordinary things about Dostoevsky, this tinge of insanity, this trail of epilepsy. One sees it in his profoundest psychology as well as in his wildest flights of imagination. And yet the "insanity" of Dostoevsky is as far from the usual concept of insanity as are his novels from ordinary novels. In knowledge of personality and life, Dostoevsky's insight is terribly acute. He is as great a realist as Tolstoy. But his lucidity is, as it were, subterranean, whereas Tolstoy's is open to the sky. And yet, mysterious and baffling as is the mind of Dostoevsky, it is nevertheless strangely sympathetic to many. For, deeper than all the gloom and secret thoughts of his heart is his boundless pity for suffering. His figures are often obscure, obsessed, hectic, and dreadful, but they nearly always live, and they are nearly always touching. Dostoevsky is at once the most menacing and the most healing of writers. He is not only the Grand Inquisitor; he is also the Forgiver of Sins.

*The Idiot* reveals all the qualities and defects of Dostoevsky at their highest tension. It is monstrous and beautiful, incoherent and brilliantly clear, full of darkness and full of light. In the figures of Myshkin "the idiot," Lebedyev the busybody, Aglaia and her mother Madame Epanchia, the wronged Nastasya Filippovna, and Rogozhin the rich merchant, Dostoevsky has given us tremendous creations. They are invincibly real, in spite of every extravagance. And there are scenes in this novel which Dostoevsky himself never surpassed—above all, the scene at the betrothal party, where Myshkin breaks a vase, and the last scene of all, where Myshkin and Rogozhin talk all night in the death-chamber of the murdered Nastasya.

The idea of *The Idiot* was one ever present in Dostoevsky's brain—the idea of the perfect Russian. Prince Myshkin is a congenital epileptic, whose mind has the simplicity of a child joined to a marvellously subtle intuition. The influence of this pure and gentle heart upon a multitude of headstrong, vicious, or morbid types is the motive of *The Idiot*. The story is a tragic one, but so full of true compassion that it soothes even as it rends. Unfortunately there is no space here to enter upon any critical detail. And without that it is hopeless to try to show the greatness of this book. Dostoevsky had something in him which no other writer ever had to the same degree—the power of moving one to the very depths; and this spirit pervades the whole fabric of *The Idiot*. It is a masterpiece of a rare order.

THE BROKEN HALO. By FLORENCE L. BARCLAY. Putnam's. 6*s*. net.

We were tempted to read this volume because a friend described it as "the worst novel ever written." That sounded so promising that we forthwith took it to bed with us. But, alas! our friend was exaggerating, as usual; *The Broken Halo* might have been worse than it is—though not much worse. Its structure is of the crudest; the cold-blooded interpolation beginning with Chapter XXIII. is an outrage; and subsidiary

characters, like that of Margaret, are farcical, machine-made rubbish. Nothing new in all this, of course; for Anglo-Saxon novels are apt to bear the hall-mark of amateurishness and futility. Here, as elsewhere, we have that curious subterranean groping after expression, that dim suggestion of a possible life-problem somewhere in the background, that exuberance of ornamentation due to innate incapacity for honest and purposeful thinking. It is indeed a baroque fabric, this average novel of ours; a tissue of improbabilities to which the reader must kindly accommodate his faculties—or be damned. In so far, *The Broken Halo* does not emerge above the crowd; its author can be as artlessly sententious and as frowsily melodramatic as the best of them. "How complete a change may be wrought in a peaceful home by the advent of a letter. It accomplishes its rapid journey for the modest sum of one penny." Or: "*There is no chance in chess*," said Mrs. Herriot. "*It has all the certainty of a mathematical calculation.*" The disquisition on love and marriage (p. 84) is rather more amusing than some we have lately read.

No. What distinguishes this effort of the imagination is the central theme. A penniless, agnostic youth marries a bewitching and pious old creature on the wrong side of sixty. There's romance for you! Now a man may not marry his grandmother. True, but what if the grandmother is rich and has a house in Park Lane? That alters the case considerably from his point of view. And what if the boy is brown-eyed, loose-limbed, full of dash and slang, and oozing virility at every pore; what if, besides these manifest outward attractions, he is worth reclaiming into the sacred fold of true believers? Ah! that alters it very considerably, from hers.

The point to notice is this: that the young fellow, despite his splendid physique, is morally not a saint; and that is why we said that *The Broken Halo* might be worse than it is. For if the hero had been a clean-minded youth and had married for normal purposes of wedlock, he would have deserved—well, let us say a footnote in the next edition of Krafft-Ebing. But he is nothing of the kind; he is frankly after the old girl's money, a climber, and something of a cad. Mrs. Barclay's psychology is sound, in this respect; and so it comes about that the story, instead of being indecent, is merely nauseating—doubly nauseating because interlarded with scriptural texts; the Light of Gospel, somehow or other, irradiates every word and action of this incongruous couple in Park Lane; when not occupied with a game of chess, they are generally talking about God. In other words, *The Broken Halo* is British to the backbone. It conforms to a puritan standard in externals, but is profoundly unchaste from an artistic point of view—intellectually vicious.

Why does Mrs. Florence Barclay, who possesses ability and refinement—why does she make us wallow in this sloppy, saccharine, sanctimonious drivel? That is what we want to know. Has she permanently made up her mind to *write down* to that ignoble and emasculate entity, that "general reader" who lacks even the courage of his vices?

Meanwhile, she has given us *The Broken Halo*, and we must extract what fun we can out of it. We must picture the hero at bedtime, after a final Bible-reading downstairs, carrying his fragile, white-haired spouse—she suffers from heart disease—up to her room in his sturdy young arms; then descending, anon, into that commodiously furnished study—how different from his struggling bachelor days!—in order to study medical treatises and fortify himself (let us hope) with a stiff brandy-and-soda. We must call to mind, above all things, that closing scene where the venerable bride, like some brave old hen laying its last egg, disposes of her final belongings (an emerald ring and a Bible) in favour of her "dear boy"—then flutters aloft, on snowy pinions, into Abraham's bosom.

But as for the next *Broken Halo*—if the authoress intends to exploit this spring-and-winter-marriage motive—let us have the *rôles* reversed! Yes; let us have a designing and impecunious old woman hunting some pure-minded, well-bred lad, some undergraduate of gentle breeding, or possibly an Eton boy. Such things have occurred, ere now. Indeed, we

venture to think that a plot on these lines would be not only more true to life, but also—what is better still—more spicy. It makes one dizzy to think of its potentialities! And if some of the situations should threaten to verge on impropriety, as well they might—why, there is an infallible remedy at hand. We will damp the glowing embers of the flesh with a few aptly-chosen quotations from Nehemiah or Habakkuk.

THE SECOND-CLASS PASSENGER. By PERCIVAL GIBBON. Methuen. 6*s*.

People who like stories—good stories—will find in this volume the pabulum required. Mr. Percival Gibbon is a master in the art of spinning a yarn. Having lived himself a great deal in the wide world, he knows a lot about the sea and sailors and ships, about wild places and wild men in wild countries, and he has an honest and splendid *penchant* for blood-curdling episode and narrative. Almost all these stories deal with some form of violence. The literary critic might be disposed to cavil at what occasionally does seem almost a melodramatic propensity. All the same, they are astonishingly well told, always interesting, always readable, and Mr. Gibbon has a very vivid power of presentation and gift of pungent language. One of his stories of an Englishman, called "A Murderer on a Ship," is indeed a memorable piece of work, as is also the first story, which seems almost autobiographical, so vivid and impressive is its *bravoura*. Here is a fine book of action written by a man who knows a good deal about it.

THE REGENT. By ARNOLD BENNETT. Methuen. 6*s*.

*The Card* was so amusing a book and struck such a fresh note of humour that Mr. Arnold Bennett was no doubt justified in carrying on his fortunes into the wider sphere of London, and in *The Regent* we find our "Card" from the five towns now a married man with a family and a slightly protuberant tummy, doing the Southerner in almost every line of business and social conduct with that cheerful cheek that was so pleasing in his younger days. As a work of art, however, *The Regent* is on a much lower plane than *The Card*, which has become a literary mannerism. Like the gentleman in *The Third Floor Back*, he does everything in exactly the same way, so that the process of iteration becomes a trifle boring. We know that whether he is up against a duchess, a peer, a theatrical manager, a lawyer, an actress, a flunkey or an hotel manager, or even an American, this successful man from the Midlands will hold out in one stroke less than his adversary, very much like Mr. Ouimet did in the championship. Also there is less subtlety in the method, and just as the man Christ in Mr. Jerome's play did everything in the same bland manner and almost in the same language, so our friend in London repeats himself a little bit too often—this, however, by way of criticism. Otherwise it certainly is a very amusing, a brisk, a breezy, a bonny book. It ought to cheer up the heart of a good many people who find the ordinary novel rather heavy going. There are some very brilliant things to be found in it. No doubt we shall have a sequel to it, for the real fact is that Mr. Bennett, who has written the most solemn trilogy of social life in recent English fiction, is really a humorist, and one of the very best, as he is dramatist, stylist, critic and essayist.

THE PASSIONATE FRIENDS. By H. G. WELLS. Macmillan. 6*s*.

Once more, in the autobiographic manner introduced in *Tono-Bungay*, Mr. Wells gives us in *The Passionate Friends* a novel which is partly sociological essay, partly a notebook of self-revelation, partly a philosophical homily wrapped up in fiction, and in that stirring language, more chastened perhaps than usual, that invariably invests this author's work with such astonishing vitality and interest. Mr. Wells has, to all appearances, broken free from the academic socialism of his early life, and now apparently feels himself alone in the world, strong enough and confident enough to break down or construct at his own sweet will and pleasure.

He writes now as a mature sage looking out upon life from the pulpit of his own library. In this novel he once more deals with the problem of marriage, and though what he says, and the manner of saying it, is invariably interesting, full of ideas and strong, it can hardly be said that Mr. Wells has added much to the question, or indeed struck any vibrating note of truth such as one finds, say, in the pages of an autobiographic writer like Strindberg. Always one feels that Mr. Wells is not saying what he would really like to say. Of course, the conditions of our literary market are preposterous, and a writer is more or less the slave of them. One lives in hope; and somehow one feels that Mr. Wells is all the time toying with his subject and never really taking out his literary knife to flense the weaknesses, sores, and evils that he evidently descries in our social life. One has the feeling that Mr. Wells is too often consciously subscribing to convention, and not really facing the music as a stern thinker and sociologist. However, this is a novel and not science, a work to entertain us rather than to instruct. Everything that Mr. Wells writes is interesting; indeed, he is perhaps the most all-round arresting novelist that we have in this country. In *The Passionate Friends* one finds very illuminating, very delightful, very eager, very tender passages. He is especially good on boyhood, and the first pages of this book are wholly delightful as composition, even if the incurable literary grumbler finds reason to cavil at the novelistic optimism which characterises every page with its inevitable avoidance of things that are not cheerful, or what Mr. Shaw would call "pleasant." There is a little too much of the *Daily Telegraph* tone about this book. None the less, it is a real book. If it does not approach the greatness of *The New Machiavelli* it is certainly a book to be read and considered.

FATHER RALPH. By OSWALD O'DONOVAN. Macmillan. 6*s*.

We know nothing of the official fate of this book, but only by a miracle could it have escaped being placed on the Index. Being a book which every Roman Catholic should read, doubtless the Church has already done her utmost to limit its circulation among her members. After the immemorial custom of institutions, the Roman Church delights to prosecute her redeemers, those who have her spiritual welfare most at heart. Mr. O'Donovan's story is a sincere and convincing indictment, not of Roman Catholicism, but of the administration of the affairs of the Church in Ireland. Mr. O'Donovan is evidently himself a devout and whole-hearted Catholic, a man of a nature so deeply religious that it has remained unperverted by the bitter experiences that must have gone to the making of this book; for there can be little doubt that *Father Ralph* is largely a record of actual experience. It is a story evidently written from the inside, and written with a transparently passionate purpose of a man moved to speak out by the knowledge that his Church is becoming a tool in the hands of the gombeen men for the suppression of the co-operative movement and of all efforts to ameliorate social conditions among the Irish people. Considered as a work of fiction, the book is able and absorbing. The character drawing is sympathetic and convincing. Unlike many reformers, Mr. O'Donovan does not blunder into exaggeration. The black is not laid on with a mop. Among the numerous priests whom he portrays there are as many sheep as goats, as many saints as sinners—men who have remained truly religious in spite of theology, in spite of the Church.

## PHILOSOPHY

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE. Edited by DR. OSCAR LEVY. Vol. xviii. Index compiled by ROBERT GUPPY. Foulis. 6*s*. net.

In one of the letters of an interesting correspondence between Nietzsche and Strindberg, published only recently, the German philosopher asks the Swedish author's help regarding the publication of a French and English

# CONSTABLE'S NEW BOOKS.

## GEORGE MEREDITH: HIS LIFE, GENIUS & TEACHING

From the French of **Constantin Photiades.** Rendered into English by Arthur Price. 6s. net.

"No better introduction to Meredith could be desired."—*The Athenæum.*

## THE DRIFT OF ROMANTICISM.

Being the Eighth Series of "SHELBURNE ESSAYS." By **Paul Elmer More.** Crown 8vo. 5s. net.

"Mr. More impresses the present reviewer deeply with the scope and penetration of his critical work . . . and the accuracy of his craftsmanship, the reassuring confidence with which he gives his judgments."—*The Athenæum.*

## TEN MORE PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE.

By **Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, M.A., LL.D.,** Author of "On Ten Plays of Shakespeare." Demy 8vo. 8s. 6d. net.

"Dr. Stopford Brooke is the 'ideal spectator' of the Shakespearian drama. . . . As he sits at the play his whole nature is thoroughly alert; intelligence, imagination, and emotion unite to receive the full impression of each scene and character: and then his own impressive speech conveys the impression to his readers without loss. . . . The words one finds oneself using of Dr. Stopford Brooke's gift of appreciation are such as 'intuition' and 'insight.'"—*The Times.*

## SIDELIGHTS.

7s. 6d. net. By **Lady Blennerhassett.**

"It is the combination of simplicity and distinction which gives the whole volume its very real charm, and makes it one that will appeal to all cultured readers."—*The Daily Telegraph.*

## NEW LETTERS OF AN IDLE MAN.

By the Author of "European Years," &c. **Hermann Jackson Warner.** Edited by G. E. Woodbeery. 7s. 6d. net.

"These delightful letters . . . the correspondence printed in this most entertaining volume is never lacking in vivacity, character, and insight . . . like all good letters, Mr. Warner's confidences overflowed with individuality, and their present prejudices and predilections are among the most persuasive of their traits. Will make friends wherever the art of correspondence is valued."—*The Daily Telegraph.*

## THE GREAT MOGHUL.

By **Stacy Waddy.** With 14 full-page Illustrations by Stephen Reid. 6s.

"Written with the aim of introducing young children to some of the wonders of Indian history, and so paving the way to the study of more 'grown up' books on the subject. Mr. Waddy has succeeded remarkably well in his object."—*The Athenæum.*

*NEW POETRY.*

## MOODS AND METRES.

By **Charles Newton Robinson.** With a Bibliographical Note and a Portrait of the Author in Photogravure. 400 copies, Imperial 16mo, 5s. net. 100 Copies, large paper, 7s. 6d. net.

"Well worth preserving. The author has put himself to school with many of the best poets without becoming imitative; his language shows us no borrowings. . . . We wish we had room to quote more. The wholesomeness of his ideals, the fastidiousness with which he chose his words, the attention he paid to metre, and his delicate mastery of it in many forms go a long way to justify his wish to be remembered by his verse. We feel sure that his friends will like to possess this volume, with its sympathetic memoirs as a preface; and we hope on account of more than one piece which it contains that it will not be overlooked by anthologists."—*The Times.*

## A DOME OF MANY-COLOURED GLASS

5s. net. By **Amy Lowell.**

These poems show the influence of the Modern French School in the careful and delicate quality of their technique, and in the subtle and sophisticated emotions with which they deal. But they are also infused with a very rare and unusual quality of emotion, which is lacking in so much of the work of to-day.

"The Road to Avignon" is one of the best lyrics of recent years.

## THE BOOK OF NATURE, 1910-1912.

5s. net. By **John Gould Fletcher.**

"It is the best by Mr. Fletcher, for nature and scenes of travel stir his imagination and give his pessimism more poetic value."—*The Times.*

*NEW 6s. NOVELS.*

**THE DREAM SHIP**
Cynthia Stockley

**NO PLACE LIKE HOME**
John Trevena

**OTHERWISE PHYLLIS**
Meredith Nicholson

**THE POT OF BASIL**
Bernard Capes

**VANISHING POINTS** Alice Brown

**A WILFUL WIDOW** Edith Moore

**THE PENALTY** Gouverneur Morris

**VV's EYES** (3rd Impression)
By the Author of "Queed"

**PITY THE POOR BLIND**
(2nd Impression). By the Author of "The Corner of Harley Street"

**HOW MANY MILES TO BABYLON?** M. E. F. Irwin

**ISLE OF THORNS**
Sheila Kaye Smith

**LONDON**

# MR. LANE'S BOOKS

**CHARLES CONDER: His Life and Works.**
By FRANK GIBSON. With a Catalogue of the Lithographs and Etchings by CAMPBELL DODGSON, Keeper of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum, with **121 Reproductions of Conder's Work, 12 of which are in Colour.** 21s. net.

**ALASTAIR: Forty-four Drawings in Colour and Black and White.**
With a Note of Exclamation by ROBERT ROSS. Limited to 500 Copies in England and America. 42s. net.

**THE BEAUTIFUL LADY CRAVEN:**
**The Original Memoirs of Elizabeth Baroness Craven afterwards Margravine of Anspach and Bayreuth and Princess Berkeley of the Holy Roman Empire (1750-1828)** Edited with Notes and an Introduction containing much hitherto unpublished matter by A. M. BROADLEY and LEWIS MELVILLE. 2 vols. 25s. net. With over 50 Illustrations.

**THE INTIMATE LETTERS OF HESTER PIOZZI TO PENELOPE PENNINGTON, 1788—1821.**
Edited by OSWALD G. KNAPP. 16s. net.

**THE GREATEST HOUSE AT CHELSEY.**
By RANDALL DAVIES. 10s. 6d. net. A most fascinating account of the great house built at Chelsea in 1520 by Sir Thomas More. With 16 Illustrations.

**ANTHONY TROLLOPE: His Work, Associates, and Originals.** By T. H. S. ESCOTT. 12s. 6d. net.

**HARRIET HOSMER: Letters and Memoirs.**
Edited by CORNELIA CARR. 12s. 6d. net. With 31 Illustrations.

**THE ANGLO-FRENCH ENTENTE IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.**
By CHARLES BASTIDE. 12s. 6d. net. With many Illustrations.

**ENGLISH TRAVELLERS of the RENAISSANCE.**
By CLARE HOWARD. 7s. 6d. net. With 16 Illustrations.

**TRAVELS WITHOUT BAEDEKER.**
By ARDERN BEAMAN. 7s. 6d. net.

**THE GATHERING STORM: Being Studies in Social and Economic Tendencies.** By "A RIFLEMAN." 5s. net.

**THE VALLEY OF SHADOWS.**
By FRANCIS GRIERSON. New Edition. With 13 Illustrations in Colour by EVELYN PAUL. 5s. net.

## NEW SHILLING NOVELS

**MADELEINE AT HER MIRROR** MARCELLE TINAYRE
**OPINIONS of JEROME COIGNARD** ANATOLE FRANCE
**CONCESSIONS** SYDNEY SCHIFF
**GREEN CHALK** DORIS SOMERVILLE
**TWO LITTLE PARISIANS** 3s. 6d. net. PIERRE MILLE
**BEHIND THE BEYOND** 3s. 6d. net. STEPHEN LEACOCK
**THE HAT SHOP** MRS. C. S. PEEL
**FASCINATION** CECIL CHAMPAIN LOWIS
**THE WORLD'S DAUGHTER** CYRIL HARCOURT
**THE SON OF HIS MOTHER** CLARA VIEBIG
**THE SONG OF SONGS** 3rd. SUDERMANN
**THE GOVERNOR** 3s. 6d. net. KARIN MACHAELIS

**THE BODLEY HEAD, VIGO STREET, LONDON, W.**

translation of his works, in order that he might obtain in foreign countries the hearing which was denied to him in his own. Strindberg's characteristic answer to this request is as follows:—

"With regard to England I have really nothing to say, for there we have to deal with a puritanical land, delivered into the hands of women—which signifies the same thing as having fallen into a state of absolute decadence. English morality, my dear sir!—you know what that means. Subscription libraries for the young person—Currer Bell, Miss Braddon, and the rest! I advise you to keep clear of all that! In French you will penetrate even to the world of the blackamoors, and you may snap your fingers at England. . . ."

This harsh criticism passed by Strindberg upon the England of his time is all the more interesting since, to a certain extent at least, the severe judgment still holds good. But the assumption that it would be for ever impossible to get a hearing for Nietzsche in these islands has happily turned out to be wrong. In the last five years this country has seen the publication of all Nietzsche's works—seventeen volumes were published in the years 1909–1911—and the eighteenth, which brings the edition to a close, now lies before us for review. This last volume contains a very exhaustive and—in view of Nietzsche's aphoristic writings—a very necessary index to the complete works. This in itself will give the reader an approximate idea of the immense range of the philosopher's thought.

Whole pages of the index are devoted to such important subjects as Rank, Culture, Christianity, Women, Greece, Art, Education, Science, Morality, Socialism; while smaller headings treat of European and Oriental movements such as the Renaissance, Anarchy, Liberalism, Buddhism, Romanticism, Sexuality, Islam, Race, Darwinism, or of interesting figures in art and literature—Dostoievski, Sterne, the Apostle Paul, Beethoven, Machiavelli, Carlyle, Heraclitus, Emerson, Stendhal—these and many others have some swift, intuitive, or flashing judgment passed upon them.

Nor is the range of Nietzsche's knowledge the only thing to impress the critic. There have been other giants of knowledge and memory, other poly-historical, all-comprehensive geniuses before him—and others will come after him, to be remembered by coming generations perhaps more as curiosities than as pioneers of the spirit. What must excite our admiration for Nietzsche's range of knowledge is this: that he did not acquire it only for acquisition's sake (there is, as we all know, a knowledge for knowledge's sake in this Alexandrine age of ours), but because he longed to re-interpret it, to throw another and hitherto unsuspected light upon the collected treasure. In his own words, he revealed all the knowledge handed down to him by the past; he pointed out where the past had been wrong and prejudiced; he laid bare all the conscious and unconscious falsehoods of former ages; he ruthlessly tore away the veil from all insincerity in life and letters. He peered sharply behind the most amiable, the most deceptive, the most honoured masks of his contemporaries. And as he candidly and coolly put down on paper—in language which has nothing of the moonshiny or mystic—all that he had seen, he was at first ignored, then detested, until in our day he has become the most debated and the most debatable philosopher of the age.

What Nietzsche objected to mostly in modern Europe was that it had fallen a prey to what he had stigmatised as slave-morality. In this category Nietzsche reckoned the most highly applauded sentiments of his day, such as love, peacefulness, humility, justice, self-sacrifice. In order not to mistake Nietzsche's meaning here, it must be clearly understood that the philosopher did not, of course, deny the value of these virtues *per se*, but that he denounced them only when he found them praised by the wrong sort of people.

"You talk of self-sacrifice?" he exclaimed to his contemporaries; "but you have nothing to sacrifice; you are weak persons, who desire that others should sacrifice themselves to you. You talk of love and

goodness, my dear friends, but goodness may be the attribute of the strong; in the mouths of the cowardly and the crushed it only signifies the wish to experience goodness from others. You talk of justice and equal rights because you very well know that you would not have to part with much, that you could only be the gainers in the bargain. You pride yourself upon your peacefulness, but you have a very good reason to be peaceful; you need a great deal of comfort and cotton-wool, because you are inwardly very sick persons. You talk aloud about your humility, your forgiveness, your 'love of enemies' even—but if lambs don't devour little babies, is it their merit? If Christians are good, can they help it?"

"But if you were only good people, good Christians," Nietzsche continued, "we would not be dissatisfied with you; on the contrary, we would be quite content. There must be, there should certainly be good, tame, and submissive people in this world! We cannot, we should not all be alike. But the great mistake you good people make is this: that not being satisfied with being good yourselves, you want others to be good as well; you would like them to be on your level, whereby you prove that you do not think much of your own goodness, and further prove that this Christian goodness of yours is mixed with a great deal of envy and hatred. For, if these others do not conform to your wish, you invariably start a revolution, in which gentle undertaking your religion (whether you are conscious or unconscious Christians) invariably helps you. Your New Testament is full of abuse against the powerful, the rich, the noble, the proud, the great of this world. By means of this religion, which has governed the world for two thousand years, you have been able to denounce all great personalities as monsters, evil-doers, and enemies of Mankind. You have systematically hunted them down, imprisoned them, killed them—at least, you have thrown doubt into their healthy souls, you have isolated them, driven them into despair, madness, or suicide. The consequence of these radical theories of yours is, that there is no more greatness left on earth, for your aristocrats and your captains of industry are at bottom only 'Christians with money,' because they acknowledge the same values as yourselves, because they are neither physically nor intellectually any more your superiors—thanks to your systematic revolutions. In short, you have succeeded in weeding out greatness, whereby you have not only robbed the tree of its fruit and the earth of its meaning, but have likewise (though this is of minor importance) done great harm to yourselves. Who can defend the herd, if not a strong dog, and even a dangerous dog, who can lead you, think for you, work for you, if not a man of will, of daring, of pride, of self-respect—in short, a man of character, one who is the opposite to your 'good' temperament, one who can be evil as well as good? By getting rid of all 'character,' all 'health,' all 'beauty,' all 'virtù,' and ἀρετή (in the Greek and Renaissance sense of the word), by pulling treacherously everyone down to your own level, by equalising mechanically everybody with everybody else, you have even defeated your own object, which avowedly is peace, comfort, and happiness. The weak cannot keep peace, for they must quarrel eternally; the weak cannot be forgiving, for they must by their very nature be revengeful; the weak cannot even love, for love requires strength. Only the strong man can be peaceful when he chooses; only the man of character can be forgiving, when he likes; only the egotist, the holy egotist, can be good and *must* be good, in order that the wealth of his nature may find an outlet, in order that he be not suffocated under the superabundance of his powers. Make room, then, for the holy Egotist, for the Superman, that he may fructify anew the Earth, that he may give a new meaning to the Earth!" Thus spake Zarathustra.

It will be seen from this very imperfect sketch that even the negative side of Nietzsche's criticism—his positive philosophy, his incessant insistence upon Race, Eugenics, and Aristocracy we are leaving out of consideration for the present—has an unmistakable, a very original value of its own. All other critics before Nietzsche have denounced the world for not being Christian and moral enough; to Nietzsche it was too Christian,

too moral; its very crimes were, according to him, sometimes the explosions of an overstrained morality. All other critics of our civilisation have clamoured that Christianity should come down from the clouds, should become practical in order to cure the ills of our time; while Nietzsche declared that it had been practical long enough, that the ills of our time were the consequences of Christianity, and that this religion therefore should remove itself again to its native clouds and celestial heights.

All reformers before Nietzsche had denounced the theological and dogmatic part of Religion, while for Nietzsche Theology and Dogma were comparatively harmless ingredients—nay, useful antidotes against the kernel of the Christian religion, its Morality, that dangerous poison prepared long before in Palestine by the Jews. For Nietzsche saw clearly that the prevailing morality of Europe was not a European article—Europe being more likely to invent machines than moralities.

This Christian morality was, in fact, an invention of the Jews.

Nietzsche nevertheless had a Jewish spiritual predecessor, who likewise had his doubts about the teachings of the prophets, who was opposed in his innermost heart to the morality of Judaism and Christianity, and that as much as the German. Nietzsche came across him one day, after he had developed his own philosophy, and, once having discovered him, he acknowledged him with the greatest delight and sincerity, for he was now no more a "lonely one"; he had found company, and quite good company too. For the predecessor of Nietzsche is the Portuguese Jew, the noble, great, immortal Baruch Spinoza; Nietzsche's immediate spiritual predecessor in European literature is another disciple of Spinoza: the German poet, scientist, philosopher, Johann Wolfgang Goethe. Not a bad lineage after all, and one that may be of interest to professors of philosophy, who up to the present do not seem to suspect that Nietzsche hails from a school whose figure-head they themselves acknowledge with eager lip-service!

For the academic philosophers of Nietzsche's day and ours have hitherto been Nietzsche's worst enemies. We should, however, try not to be too severe on them, for there is some very good reason for their opposition. They could not have acted otherwise and been true to themselves. For all modern philosophers—as well as all those of the preceding century—are and were conscious or unconscious followers of Plato.

"There are only two kinds of human beings in this world, and each understands the other with difficulty," the German Jacobi wrote at the beginning of last century, "those who acknowledge Spinoza and those who acknowledge Plato as their master—there is no third species in existence."

How then could the Platonic school of modern thought, reigning as it did in all the universities and academies of Europe and America, receive a Friedrich Nietzsche with open arms? True, this school valued (or pretended to value) Spinoza—there it was wrong—but Spinoza was dead; they would not have acknowledged him if he had been alive. Spinoza wrote in Latin, and even hid his Latin behind an abstruse, mathematical form: they would not have acknowledged him if he had written in the straightforward, virile, and beautiful language of Friedrich Nietzsche. They simply did not understand, or did not care to understand what the Jewish sage was driving at; Spinoza's philosophy is unintelligible to, or at least inadmissible for, a Platonist. For it is a poet's philosophy and a philosophy for poets—and poets, it will be remembered, were to be banished from Plato's ideal republic; they are banished even to-day from our Platonic democracies, and only admitted if they condescend to deal in moonshine and morality!

There are innumerable signs, however, that our old friend the pendulum will again swing in another direction, away from the "divine," all-too-divine Plato, away from mysticism, emotionalism, romanticism, and fog—into more terrestrial, human, sober, and practical regions. The past century—we can distinguish it clearly by now—was entirely Platonic

and Christian—nay, Puritan and Nonconformist. Its present heir, the twentieth, will again see a return to saner ideals, an occupation with "things that matter" ("die nächsten Dinge," as Nietzsche called them), an acceptance of human nature as it is, but a decided division between the lower and higher kind of human nature. "Some men are φύσει δοῦλοι —some people are born slaves," wrote Aristotle, that great opponent of Plato, who most certainly will come into his own again in the present century after the defeat of Plato, and be once more what he has been through all the ages: "the great Master of all those who know." And with time will return many others who have been merely tolerated and half-understood in our time. There will be Montaigne, whom Bacon and Shakespeare loved so well; there will be the profound La Rochefoucauld, who is worshipped by all realistic investigators of human nature; there will be the great Corneille, whom Napoleon would have made a prince had he lived in his age, and together with Corneille his whole manly seventeenth century, not to forget the eighteenth with witty Voltaire as its head. Thus the twentieth century will again see reason triumph over emotion, the masculine spirit over the feminine, the classical over the romantic. . . .

To Nietzsche will belong the double glory: of having opened the path not only to himself, but likewise to these many great and sane spirits of former ages. On this account alone we feel a sort of satisfaction at his introduction into this country, an undertaking which—considering the overpowering position of Platonism—was by no means an easy affair. It has taken twenty years to break the resistance of the opposing forces. For twenty years a war, unreported in the papers and therefore unperceived by the great public, has been raging in our midst, a spiritual war, which, strange to say, has ended in favour of an insignificant minority. We well remember the early stages of this war, and the numerous initial defeats of the Nietzscheans. We remember how during sixteen years their heroic efforts to get a hearing for Nietzsche were defeated one after the other. It was singularly fortunate that Nietzsche's few supporters in this country were possessed of tenacity and courage, and inspired to a certain extent by their master's idealism. They were thus enabled to stick to their guns till the Platonic tradition was broken. These defenders of Nietzsche have done their work well. They have given us translations of their philosopher which, being the work of devoted disciples, rank far above the ordinary. Dr. Oscar Levy and his collaborators may now be congratulated upon the conclusion of a great and difficult task.

England is richer for a gift of great moral and intellectual value—moral dynamite to clear away obstructions, and solid moral values wherewith to build new paths for the progress of the race.

## POETRY

THE MOXFORD BOOK OF ENGLISH VERSE: 1340–1913. Presented by A. STODART-WALKER. Eveleigh Nash.

It is a time-honoured diversion, this, of making respectable people look absurd. And an altogether justifiable pastime; we cannot keep ourselves at a heroic pitch for an indefinite length of time; sooner or later there comes the inevitable reaction. At least, it ought to come. For a mischievous healthfulness lies at the bottom of that hankering after the incongruous which finds its expression in parody. After any sustained mental effort or flight of imagination we naturally seek to regain our ordinary equilibrium by means of something like this:—

> To drink, or not to drink,—that is the question:—
> Whether 'tis better for a man to suffer
> The desperate longings of outrageous thirst, &c.

So it comes about that nobody is safe from the attacks of this impish spirit—nobody, that is, who has aspired in any way to keep our intellects

at an inordinately high pitch of attention. It is his punishment for striving after the divine to be dragged down again, mirthfully, to the level of all other mortals. Pure fun, of course; the true parody is never spleenful or vindictive. None the less, it is playing with the gods in rather intimate fashion. Milton, Pope, and all our great writers have been assailed by a mocking little devil who refuses to be impressed by their mighty names, who turns them inside out for our delectation, and insists upon proving, what we knew long ago, that the sublime and the ridiculous are not so far apart as we thought them. Shakespeare, too, has come in for his full share of parody, and as to Wordsworth—his drowsy self-complacency and sententiousness seem to have been specially created for this purpose. The Bible has been parodied over and over again.

It may be doubted whether there were parodists among the stone-age primevals. These folks were probably too bilious owing to irregular dieting—too self-conscious (from indigestion) to relish this kind of sport. But parodists may well have thrived in the oral stage, before the invention of letters; and among the ancients, as soon as society had settled down to civilised conditions and had learned to feed properly, they began to appear in all their glory. The old Greeks, like Hipponax and Aristophanes, seem to have realised the fact that a good parody is creative work of permanent value—a joy for ever; their masterpieces—Homer and the rest of them—were all submitted to this process of benignant scarification: of *scarronification,* as one might call it, in honour of one of the greatest French exponents of the art. Virgil and the great Latins passed through the fire in their turn; the *Pumpkinification of Claudius,* a complicated Roman parody, has lately appeared in the Loeb Library.

It is a Frenchman, by the way, who has given us perhaps the best treatise on the subject—Delepierre. He is quite pleased with our English achievements in this department, and gives a noble list of persons who have shed lustre upon the art of parody; he points out, what is rather interesting, that the English literary parody only began with the nineteenth century; up to that time it had been concerned chiefly with political ends. We may have lost a little of our capacity to unbend in the period between the Rejected Addresses and Thackeray; perhaps we were too busy—or too dyspeptic; Isaac Disraeli laments that parody, in which the Greeks gloried, was practised somewhat "too rarely" by the moderns. But there has been a laudable revival of late. The *Ignes Fatui* (second edition, 1911) contained some fine fooling. Then, last year, appeared the really notable volume of Messrs. Adam and White. And now, as the youngest descendant of this long line of ancestors, comes *The Moxford Book of English Verse.*

It is stuff to browse upon in leisure moments—not to read conscientiously from cover to cover. None of our poets, from Chaucer to those now alive, seems to come amiss to this Mephistophelean author; and glancing through the pages one hits upon admirable things, such as his version of Sir Philip Sidney, beginning—

> My true friend hath my hat, and I have his,
> By choice of mine, one for another changed:
> I hold his dear, and mine he'd never miss,
> There never was a better swop arranged:
> My true friend hath my hat, and I have his. . . .

He can also reconstruct Wordsworth in good style:—

> My heart leaps up when I behold
> A mince pie on the table;
> So was it when my youth began,
> So is it now I am a man,
> So be it when I shall grow old,
> If I am able.
> The Boy eats faster than the Man,
> And I could wish my meals to be
> Bound each to each by rich mine-piety.

There are one or two parodies, like that on Keats (p. 84), which illustrate a danger of this art—the possibility that the fun may be pro-

tracted too long and our patience overstrained. But, on the whole, as an antidote to pompousness and ultra-strenuousness, as a cleansing of the mind, the thing has been excellently managed; the form and phraseology of the victims has been maintained, while their original subjects have been converted by subtle alchemy into modern themes, such as aviation, telephones, politics, golf, and female suffrage. How is this, for example—

> D'ye ken yon peel, with its coat so gay?
> D'ye ken yon peel on the pavement lay?
> D'ye ken yon peel, where I fell to-day?
> On my head and my hands in the morning—

or the "Tearing of the Green" on the previous page. Moreover, the writer has understood how to keep his verses within their proper domain. Some of Lewis Carrol's appropriations are rather to be called travesties; they treat a serious original in purely jocular fashion; whereas the essence of true parody is that the old gravity should be apparently kept up in another mode. So when our author replaces Lamb's well-known verses by these—

> I have seen "Paul Pry," I have seen "Box and Cox,"
> In my days of boyhood, in my joyful school-days.
> All, all are gone, the old familiar farces—

he shows that he has caught the genuine spirit of his art.

MOODS AND METRES. By CHARLES NEWTON-ROBINSON. Constable. 5s.

Readers of THE ENGLISH REVIEW are already acquainted with some of the work of the late Mr. Newton-Robinson. In 1910 his "Ballad of Richmodis" appeared in these pages; then, last May, Mr. William Stebbing gave us a careful study of a large part of his poetic output. It is sad to think that the author himself died while this illuminating paper was in the press, and that the present volume is, presumably, to be the last we shall have from his pen.

A short preface gives us some idea of his life, many-sided and full of activities. To his kindly personality, to his refined and sympathetic feeling for nature, these poems will bear witness.

---

*Although every precaution is taken, the Proprietors will not be responsible for the loss or damage of the manuscripts that may be sent in for consideration; nor can they undertake to return manuscripts which are not accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.*